

BRITISH SAILOR HEROES

SERIES I



THE HERO READERS

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SERIES I

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME

BRITISH SAILOR HEROES

SERIES II

Boscawen, Rodney, Howe, Hood,
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BRITISH SOLDIER HEROES

SERIES I

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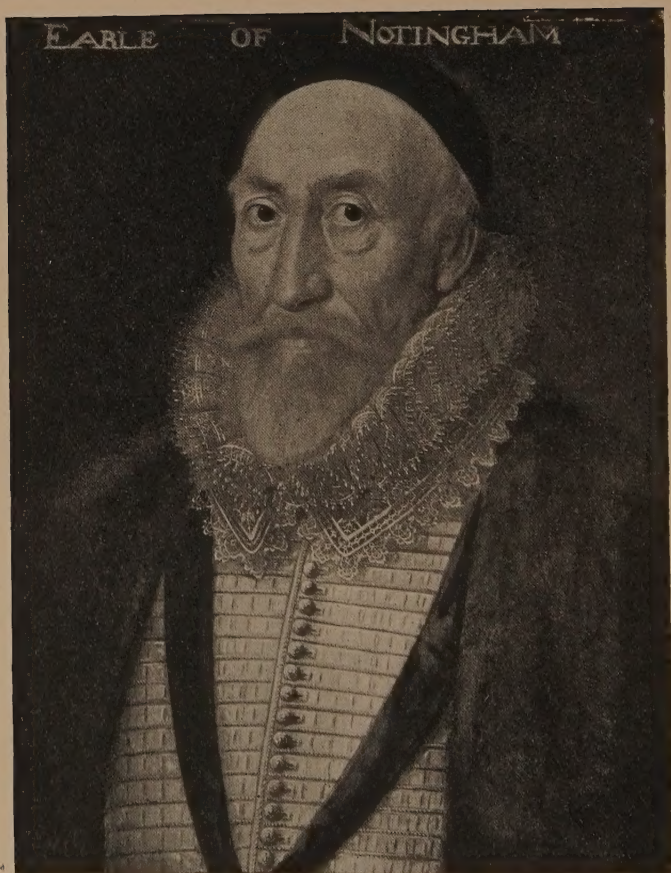
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SHACKLETON in the ANTARCTIC.

Being the Story of the British Antarctic Expedition, 1907-1909. By Sir Ernest Shackleton. (THE HERO READERS)

LONDON : WILLIAM HEINEMANN



CHARLES HOWARD, EARL OF NOTTINGHAM
From a painting by an unknown artist at Hampton Court

BRITISH SAILOR HEROES

SERIES I

HOWARD, DRAKE, BLAKE, ROOKE,
ANSON, HAWKE · ADAPTED *from the* ORIGINAL EDITION OF "TWELVE SAILORS,
FROM HOWARD TO NELSON" EDITED
BY SIR T. KNOX LAUGHTON · D.LITT.
WITH FORTY-EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS



LONDON MCMXIII
WILLIAM HEINEMANN

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INTRODUCTION

BEING considered one to whom Chronology as well as Geography is part of the stock-in-trade, the Editor has often been asked to assign a date to the birth of the English navy. He has always answered that it is impossible to do so; that the navy, like the family of Douglas, is seen in the stream but not in the fountain; that when English history begins, the navy was already an English institution; that the first mention of the English people that has come down to us, describes them as fierce pirates, the terror of the North Sea; and the name of the Saxon shore, the name of England itself, bears testimony to the continuance of their early sea power. What was done in later years by Alfred or Ethelred or Henry VIII, was work of reconstruction, of reorganization, of improved administration—such as the present century has known when the navy board was abolished, in 1832; when screw line-of-battle ships took the place of sailing ships in 1853–60, or were themselves superseded by the ironclads of the present day. But great as was the work accomplished in each of their reigns, the navy was not called into being by Alfred, or Ethelred, or Henry VIII, any more than it was by William IV or Victoria.

It is indeed true that the young navy, composed, as it was, of ships which could not keep the sea, was vastly stronger for attack than for defence; that at first, it was quite unequal to ward off invasion; and that, even after the reconstruction by Alfred, or the reorganization by Ethelred, it was not the sure safeguard which it eventually became. Like other national institutions, it had its ups and

its downs; but at a very early period in our history, men recognized that the security of the kingdom was based on its navy. When, in 1213, the Earl of Salisbury captured or burnt the whole of the French fleet at Damme; when, in 1217, Hubert de Burgh destroyed the French fleet off Sandwich; when Edward III annihilated the French fleet at Sluys in 1340, or crushed the Spaniards off Winchilsea in 1350, there was no doubt in the minds of our forefathers that the navy was "the wall and fence of the kingdom." "But now," wrote Capgrave in the evil days of Henry VI, "now that our enemies are upon the wall, what will they do to us, unprepared to receive them? Our ships are scanty, our sailors few in number and unskilled in seamanship. Truly the ship ought to be taken off our money and a sheep be stamped on it instead."

The accession of Henry VII brought in the dawn of a better state of things; and the modern organization of the navy was begun by Henry VIII. Since then, each century has witnessed great changes; changes in the structure, the equipment, the armament of our ships—this now expiring century the greatest of all; changes too in the administration and organization; and yet, through all, we may trace the continuity of progress, the permanence of tradition. Unquestionably the civil wars of the fifteenth century made a break—not absolute, but relative and strongly marked, and on this account as well as on account of the modern organization then begun, the navy may, in a restricted sense, be dated from the reign of Henry VIII. It was then, too, that the sea-keeping power of ships began to be improved, and the science of war at sea, as we now understand it, began to be developed. The modern history of the English navy may thus properly be said to begin at this time; and it has been so considered in the several chapters of the present volume.

In these chapters, which trace the career of some of our most distinguished sailors—the men who may most fittingly be denominated the Builders of the Empire—there is no pretence at original research. It has indeed sometimes happened that special opportunities or special studies have given the writer special knowledge; and the opening pages of the sketch of Lord Hood are based on notes made by the Editor a couple of years ago during a short summer holiday in Dorsetshire, when circumstances enabled him to examine the registers of Netherbury and some other interesting documents—leases and suchlike—throwing light on the ramifications of this remarkable family. But, as a broad generality, the facts of history and biography have been taken from the latest authorities, and largely from the memoirs in the *Dictionary of National Biography*—for which, indeed, the Editor, in another capacity, is mainly responsible. What has been chiefly aimed at is to show how the work and methods of the great sailors of the past strike the sailors of the present; and for that, the Editor may justly congratulate himself on having secured the co-operation of the very distinguished officers who have contributed the several chapters. Some of these are already well known in the field of literature; all are known as commanders of long and varied experience; men who, having for many years braved the dangers of the sea, are in the ideal position to comprehend its mysteries.

In passing the work through the press, the Editor has ventured to add a few notes, in elucidation or further illustration of statements in the text. For these, which are distinguished by square brackets, he alone is responsible.

THE EARL OF NOTTINGHAM, K.G.

(1536-1624.)

CHARLES HOWARD, Lord Howard of Effingham, Earl of Nottingham, as he was called at various stages of his long and eventful career, was lord high admiral of England when England was first rising into eminence as a great maritime power. He was also commander-in-chief of England's fleet in two of the most critical actions in the country's history.

It has, indeed, been commonly said that he was neither seaman nor commander-in-chief, that Drake defeated the Armada, and that Raleigh led the fleet triumphantly into Cadiz. But a careful study of his career shows that he was much more than an expensive figure-head, placed in a high position by his relationship to the queen, and maintained in it by courtly intrigues.

Though not trained to the sea from his boyhood, as Drake and Hawkins and Frobisher were, he had nevertheless a considerable experience of maritime affairs, and though not perhaps qualified to be boatswain or master of one of the queen's ships, he had a more practical knowledge of the art of war by sea than many of his contemporaries who are ranked among the most brilliant of Elizabethan seamen, or than some of his most illustrious successors, such as Blake and Sandwich and Albemarle.

It is true that he owed his appointment as lord admiral to the accident of birth, though not so much to his being the cousin of the queen, as to his being the son of his

father, the first Lord Howard of Effingham; and the nephew of his uncles, who had held the same office of lord admiral under Henry VIII and Queen Mary, as their grandfather had done under Richard III.

There are few things more remarkable in English history than the story of the Howards under the Tudors. They were of old lineage, but not one of the great families of Plantagenet times. It was only on the extinction of the male line of the Mowbrays, Earls of Nottingham and Dukes of Norfolk, that John Howard, the representative of the family through his mother, and the loyal follower of Richard III, was, in 1483, created Duke of Norfolk.

He was killed in the battle of Bosworth, and his title was attainted; and although his son Thomas made peace with Henry VII, and was created Earl of Surrey in 1489, the higher title remained in abeyance until 1514, when it was restored for his good service to the state on the field of Flodden.

But in the meantime the Earl of Surrey and his sons—more especially Lord Thomas Howard and Sir Edward Howard—had been winning distinction by loyal service. It is said that the ships which, in 1511, put an end to the piracies and life of Andrew Barton were commanded by the Howards, and though the story which has come down to us in the old ballad is certainly fiction, it is true that Barton was slain at that time, and it is not improbable that the Howards were the heroes of the exploit.

In 1512 Sir Edward Howard commanded the fleet off Brest, then but recently become a French port, but destined ever since to be the arsenal and rallying point of the French navy, and in the battle fought on the 10th of August, the “Regent”, commanded by Sir Thomas Knyvet, Howard’s brother-in-law, was grappled by the “Marie de la Cordelière.” The two ships, the

largest in their respective fleets, caught fire and blew up together, and the greater part of the men perished, to the number of nearly 1,500.

Howard, who was warmly attached to his brother-in-law, vowed revenge, and in April, 1513, having in the meantime succeeded to the office of admiral of England, he returned off Brest with the whole navy, strengthened by many merchant ships hired for the occasion. Unequal to such a force, the French fleet remained within the harbour, while Howard, anchoring in Bertheaume Bay, closely blockaded the port. And presently a squadron of galleys came round from the Mediterranean, under the command of the Chevalier Prigent de Bidoux. Too weak to fight, and unable to pass into the harbour without fighting, Prigent took refuge in Whitsand Bay and anchored close inshore, where, by reason of the shoal water, the English ships could not attack him.

Then followed the first attempt at "cutting out" which has been recorded. Howard went in with the boats of the fleet and some row-barges, and he himself steered straight for Prigent's galley, and grappled and sprang on board at the head of some seventeen men. But the French cut the grapnel rope, and the tide swept the row-barge away, with the result that Howard and his companions were left unsupported.

The other boats, unable to see clearly what had happened on account of the smoke, galled extremely by the enemy's shot, and having no definite instructions, returned to the ships, as also did the admiral's barge. Then only was it known that the admiral had been left behind, and a flag of truce having been sent in, it was discovered that all the Englishmen had been pushed overboard at point of pike.

The death of the admiral of England naturally aroused

excitement. Howard's rashness, the blundering stupidity—to give it no worse name—of his followers, was lost sight of in his superb audacity. It might not be war, but it was magnificent; and even from far-away Scotland King James wrote to his brother-in-law, Henry VIII: "Surely, dearest brother, we think more loss to you of your late admiral, who deceased to his great honour and laud, than the advantage might have been of the winning of all the French galleys and their equipage."

Lord Thomas Howard succeeded his brother as admiral, but he had no opportunity to win distinction at sea. Though on shore some months later, as the readers of *Marmion* will remember, he gallantly supported his father in the battle of Flodden.

A younger brother, William Howard, served during Henry VIII's later Scotch and French wars, and for part, at least, of the time in command at sea. He was made lord admiral in 1554, and was in command of that squadron which, in July, 1554, escorted Philip of Spain to Southampton, when he came to England to marry Queen Mary. But the familiar story that, on meeting the prince in the Channel, he compelled him to strike his flag and lower his topsails in acknowledgment of the queen's "dominion of the sea" is unsupported by any contemporary evidence, English or Spanish. If anything of the kind had happened we may be sure that the Spanish chroniclers would have mentioned it as an instance of English barbarism; and so, like many other stories relating to the "dominion of the sea", it may confidently be said to be fiction—possibly with, more probably without, a slender basis of fact.

All of this may seem foreign to the story of Charles Howard, but it is, in reality, closely connected with it.



WILLIAM HOWARD, FIRST LORD HOWARD OF EFFINGHAM

From an engraving by Ogborn after a contemporary painting

For, as has been shown, notwithstanding various breaks, the office of lord admiral was, for a century and a half, largely an appanage of the Howard family. In the traditions of that inheritance, and amid the legends which perpetuated the memory of Sir Edward's exploits and glorious death, Charles Howard grew from infancy to manhood.

It has been supposed that he served afloat with his father from 1554 to 1557, possibly also during the early period 1544 to 1546. If so, he had a great deal more sea-service as a lad than was considered necessary, in the last great war, to qualify an admiral's son for promotion to the rank of captain and to the command of a saucy frigate.

Born in 1536, he was twenty-one in 1557, when his father's service as lord admiral came to an end, and at the age of twenty-one many a gallant officer in the old war was a very competent seaman. Whether Howard was or was not is not of the greatest consequence; it is enough for our purpose to show that, in all probability, he acquired in his youth a familiar knowledge of ships and sailors and the duties of sea-officers, which in later life he was to turn to such excellent advantage.

With the accession of Elizabeth a new life opened to him. Like his father, he had been under a cloud during a great part of Mary's reign. His father had, it is true, been created Lord Howard of Effingham in March, 1554, for his loyal service in the suppression of Wyatt's rebellion. But the memory of this had been obliterated by the suspicion of what was deemed undue attachment to the interests of Elizabeth. Later on Mary seems to have been assured of his loyalty, but though, in the last year of her reign, she appointed him lord chamberlain of the household, she continued to regard him with disfavour.

By Elizabeth he was again appointed lord chamberlain, and his son also stepped into a prominent position at court. Handsome in person, gentle and adventurous in disposition, Charles Howard became a favourite with the queen. With few exceptions, as when he was sent with a complimentary embassy to Francis II of France, he passed the first twelve years of the reign in attendance on the court, and although in 1569 he had a command in the army employed under the Earl of Warwick to suppress the rising in the north, it was not until 1570 that he had any service at sea. He then commanded the squadron sent to escort the young Queen of Spain down the Channel, perhaps also to insure the coasts or trade of England from any aggression on the part of the ships that conveyed her.

From the earliest times England has always been jealous of the appearance of foreign ships of war in the narrow seas, which she claimed as English territory, and her guard against them has from time to time taken the guise of compliment. But the story told by Hakluyt, that Howard "enviored the Spanish fleet in most strange and warlike sort, and enforced them to stoop gallant and to vail their bonnets for the Queen of England," is probably a very exaggerated account of the salutes at meeting. That Howard used any force towards them is virtually contradicted by the silence of the State Papers. In any case the service was but a small one, and scarcely interrupted his attendance upon the queen.

By his father's death in 1573 he succeeded to the barony as Lord Howard of Effingham, the title by which he is most commonly known, as being that which he bore during the years of his most brilliant and important services. On the death of the Earl of Lincoln, in 1585, he was appointed lord admiral of England, not—as has



QUEEN ELIZABETH

From a painting by an unknown artist in the National Portrait Gallery

been already said—on account of any special knowledge of sea affairs, but because he was a Howard; because he was his father's son; because he was the queen's cousin. It must, however, be remembered that he was, by this time, in his fiftieth year, and that the queen had come to consider him not only as a courtier, but as a devoted friend and prudent adviser. The time, too, was critical, for the long-simmering enmity of Spain broke out into open hostility, and though war was not declared, though diplomatic relations were not broken off, an avowedly English army was sent to the Low Countries, and Drake, with a strong fleet, was sent on a raiding voyage through the West Indies.

Add to this the Throckmorton conspiracy, fomented by Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador, who was summarily ordered to quit the country, and the Babington conspiracy, implicating the unfortunate Queen of Scots, who was tried by a special commission, found guilty, and sentenced to death, and anyone can realize that it was a time in which it would have been criminal folly to have placed a man in a position for which he was unqualified. What concerns us here, as evidence of the very high and responsible position then occupied by Howard, are the facts that he was one of the commissioners on this trial, as on many later and important ones, and that afterwards it was mainly he who induced Elizabeth to sign the order for the sentence on Mary, Queen of Scots, to be carried into execution.

We might then easily persuade ourselves that his appointment on December 21, 1587, as "lieutenant-général, commander-in-chief and governor of the whole fleet and army at sea fitted forth against the Spaniards and their allies" was given to him, not only because he was lord admiral and the queen's cousin, but to some

extent also because he was known as a man of prudence as well as of conduct, a man of tried valour and of some experience at sea, a man of calm and judicial temper, who could be trusted to moderate the rashness and control the fiery passions of his subordinates.

This, however, is merely a suggestion, which is ill-supported by the queen's conduct in appointing a worthless favourite, like Leicester, to the command of the army in the Low Countries, or a hot-headed braggart, like Essex, to the joint command of the expedition to Cadiz. All that we can say then is that, on this occasion, the choice of custom and of court influence was also the choice of wisdom. No better appointment could have been made.

The name of Drake will, of course, occur to every one as that of a possible substitute, perhaps even as of one who ought to have been preferred to Howard. Drake, whose achievements are related in the next chapter, was unquestionably one of the finest seamen England has known. He was a man of most resolute and venturesome courage, which to many seemed akin to rashness, but which was really tempered by knowledge, prudence, and foresight; a man whose very name carried terror to England's enemies and confidence to England's friends. But as he was also masterful and self-reliant to an extreme degree, he was not always happy as a commander in an age when men thought more of social than of service rank.

In his voyage round the world Drake had to pass and execute a sentence of death on Doughty, and whilst fresh from the defeat of the Armada a violent quarrel between him and Frobiser was smoothed over only, it would appear, by the tact of Lord Sheffield, if not, indeed, by the good offices of Howard himself.

It was in this and matters of the same kind that high rank was necessary in a commander-in-chief. Lord Henry Seymour—a son of the Protector Somerset—felt it a hardship to obey even Howard; he would have flatly refused to receive orders from Drake. So also with the other noblemen in the fleet—captains of ships or volunteers. They could accept orders from a man of Howard's rank and age, but Hawkyns, Wynter, Frobiser, Palmer, and others would have considered any order of Drake's as one to be obeyed or not at their pleasure. They considered Drake as an equal, whose right to command might be disputed, but to be commanded by Howard was in natural course, and the higher his rank the greater the honour.

So in the end of December, 1587, Howard took command of the fleet then gathered in the Narrow Seas, as the practical answer to the reports from Spain of a vast fleet fitting out, or of immediate invasion by the army already in the Low Countries. To many this last seemed to be the danger most to be guarded against, and though Drake had been sent to Plymouth to command the ships of the West Country, it was not until the end of May, 1588, that Howard joined him with the bulk of the fleet.

The guard of the Narrow Seas was left to Lord Henry Seymour, with whom were Sir William Wynter and Sir Henry Palmer, men who had "followed the sea" from their youth, though differing from most of their contemporaries; they had served only in ships of the navy royal. For forty, or maybe fifty, years, wherever a fleet had been assembled, there Wynter had served, gaining experience and a knowledge of the science of naval war. He was now master of the ordnance, and though between him and Hawkyns, the treasurer of the navy, there was a bitter jealousy, during this year the two were

apart, each working for the common weal. As guard of the Narrow Seas Seymour's squadron had to keep a constant watch upon the movements of the Prince of Parma in the Low Countries, and especially to watch Dunkirk and the ports of the Scheldt, wherever it was possible that an embarkation might be attempted.

This was continued through all of the early summer, notwithstanding the boisterous weather of an exceptional season. Of this service the most interesting account is given in the letters of Wynter, which show how, with few traditions to guide him, he had evolved from his long experience and great judgment a right understanding of one of the first principles of what we now—thanks to Captain Mahan—know as “the influence of sea power.”

From this point of view, one of his letters written to Walsyngham on June 20 is so interesting and so important, that some sentences of it are given in language only slightly modernized from the original:

“It seems, by your Honour's letters, that the Prince of Parma's intention is towards Sheppey, Harwich, or Yarmouth, two of which places—Sheppey and Harwich—I know perfectly; the other not so well. And yet, if I do not mistake the situation of the said places, they are such that a small charge, in a manner of speaking, will make them of sufficient strength to withstand any sudden attempt. And whereas it is said that the prince's strength is 30,000 soldiers, then I assure your Honour that it is no small quantity of shipping that will be needed for the transport of that number and of what belongs to them, without which I do not think they will start. There must be at least 300 sail, of the average burden of 60 tons.”

Wynter goes on to show, from his own experience in Scotland, how difficult it is to land men, even when there is “no fear of any hindrance by sea.”

He then proceeds: "And I take the prince's case to be very different. For I suppose if the countries of Holland and Zealand did furnish only the shipping which—when we sailed for Plymouth—the lord admiral wrote to our admiral they would send from those parts to join us here, namely, thirty-six sail of ships of war, and if it were known to the prince those ships did nothing but remain in readiness to go to the seas to attack his fleet as soon as it came out, I should live until I were young again ere the prince would venture to set his ships forth. And, again, if her Majesty's ships, and the others that are now left under our admiral's charge, may be kept together in their present state, the prince's forces, which he has in Flanders at this time—upon which we mean to keep as good a watch for their coming as we possibly can—dare not come to the seas. . . . Your honourable opinion that 1,000 footmen and 200 horsemen might be assigned to each of the three several places before named, to resist any attempt, and to remain until it be seen what the prince's designs may be, I conceive to be very good. For in these princely actions a man cannot be too provident; and no wisdom were it to put things to an even balance when more weight may be added."

In conclusion he writes: "If it will please your Honour to cause some one of your good friends hereabouts near the seaside to bestow a buck upon me and Sir Henry Palmer, we should think ourselves greatly beholden to your Honour." And it is pleasing to be able to add that this most observant man both received and enjoyed his venison.

Even in the Downs the victualling of the ships was a continual and pressing difficulty, and at Plymouth, where the great bulk of the fleet was assembled under Howard, the difficulty was still greater. Howard wanted the

ships always to have victuals for six weeks on board, but during the whole season the ships were constantly in need, for the scanty provision was running short almost as soon as it was put on board. From the very first, before he went to Plymouth, Howard had urged the importance of a greater supply, and had pointed out the danger of the ships being called out for immediate service just as their victuals ran out.

It has often been said that this want was caused by the niggardliness of the queen, but it does not appear that the queen had anything to do with it, or that there was any niggardliness in the matter. On the contrary, the money seems to have been regularly ordered and paid, and the scantiness of the supplies was due to a lack of previous preparation, and the utter want of established store-houses or victualling-yards.

In consequence of the scarcity, victuals had to be obtained in various ways not quite regular, as, for instance, by seizing for the service of the crown, a cargo of rice on board a Hansa ship which put into Plymouth.

And, again, supplies were eked out by putting the men on short allowance, five or six men to a mess instead of four. As, however, the established ration at the time was two pounds of beef and a gallon of beer per man, it does not seem that there was any very great hardship entailed on the ships' companies by this measure, while it gave Howard a freedom of action, by always leaving him with a margin of supplies, beyond what was known to Burghley, who, for the time being, had this department under his control.

During his stay at Plymouth Howard continually urged on the queen and her ministers the advisability of the fleet's going to look for the enemy on their own coasts or in their own ports, as Drake had done the year

before when he "singd the King of Spain's beard" in the harbour of Cadiz. To this, however, the queen would not consent.

Instructions were sent that he was on no account to go so far south as the Isles of Bayona, lest the Spanish fleet, standing out well to the west, might avoid them, leave them behind, and so come in, unopposed, to land either in England or in Ireland, or to go to Scotland.

Howard's reply is noteworthy, not only as showing the obstinacy with which he urged his proposals, but also as showing how clearly he understood the matter in hand. Here and always his letters and phrases are those of a man who understood perfectly what he was talking about.

Writing to Walsyngham on June 15, he said:—

"For the meaning we had to go on the coast of Spain, it was deeply debated by those whom I think the world judges to be the men of greatest experience in this realm, namely, Sir Francis Drake, Mr. Hawkyns, Mr. Frobiser, and Mr. Thomas Fenner; and I hope her Majesty will not think that we went so rashly to work, or without a principal and choice care and respect for the safety of this realm. We would go on the coast of Spain, and therefore our ground first was to look principally to that; and if we found that they but lingered on their own coast, or had put into the Isles of Bayona or Corunna, then we thought, in the judgment of all men of experience here, that it would be most fit to seek some good way, the surest we could desire, by the good protection of God, to defeat them. We considered also that to the Spanish forces, being victualled, as they are, for a long time, it would be very good policy to delay, so as to drive us to consume our victuals, which, as far as we can see, cannot easily be replaced, whatever efforts the queen and you may make. And if the queen thinks that she

is in this respect on a par with the King of Spain, she is much deceived and may be brought into great peril. For this abuse of the negotiations plainly shows how the King of Spain will have all things perfect, as his plot is laid, before he will proceed to execute. I am persuaded he will see the Duke of Guise bring the French King to his purpose before he will act. If this be his intention, what, I pray you, will become of us when our victuals are consumed in gazing for them? Whether this may not breed very great danger and dishonour, I leave to her Majesty's wisdom; but if it should fall out so, I would I had never been born.

"And if we were to-morrow on the coast of Spain, I would not land in any place, to offend any; but they should perceive that we did not come to plunder, but to seek out the great force and fight with them; and that, they should know by message, which would be the surest way and most honourable to her Majesty.

"But now that we are directed to lie off and on betwixt England and Spain, the south-west wind that shall bring them to Scotland or Ireland, shall put us to leeward. The seas are broad; but if we were on their coast, they durst not put off, leaving us on their backs; and when they came with the south-westerly wind, which they must have if they are bound for Ireland or Scotland, though we were as high as Cape Clear we could not go to them so long as the wind remains westerly. And if we lie so high [as Cape Clear] then may the Spanish fleet hug the coast of France, and make the Isle of Wight; which, for my part, I think they will attempt, if they come to England."

This is not the letter of a man who is a mere figure-head, rather is it the letter of one who was, in fact as well as in name, commander-in-chief. It shows a clear understand-

ing and appreciation of the naval and political circumstances, and though in it Howard speaks of being guided, or at least supported, by the opinion of his council, it would have been strange had he not attached weight to the opinions of men who had a much fuller knowledge of nautical affairs than himself.

But the appeal to a council of war was in no way peculiar to Howard, and for more than 100 years after this time it was not only customary, but prescribed, to summon a council on every possible occasion. Indeed, no important movement of the fleet could take place without one.

It was not until it had been shown—as in the fatal instance which led to the execution of Admiral Byng—that a council was at least as likely to blunder as one commander-in-chief, that it was seldom likely to act with quickness or vigour, and that it could not absolve the admiral from responsibility, that an end was put to the practice. Though in a very modified form, and entirely at the option of the commanding officer, it may be said to have continued to the present time.

Howard certainly shared Drake's opinion of the advisability of looking for the enemy in their own ports, because he knew the conditions of the problem sufficiently to be convinced by Drake's reasoning. And, being so convinced, he made the proposal his own, even though the queen would not allow it to be carried out.

The queen's reason for refusing her consent is doubtful, but probably she thought that the war might still be carried on in the same desultory fashion as during the last three years, and was unwilling to set Philip the example of more sustained efforts.

Possibly, too, she had persuaded herself that the Spanish preparations were merely a threat, which any

aggressive action of hers might convert into a reality. Howard, indeed, seems to have believed that she was hoodwinked, and from the very first insisted that treachery was intended.

As early as January 27 he wrote to Walsyngham:—"I have made of the French King, the Scottish King, and the King of Spain a Trinity that I mean never to trust to be saved by, and I would that, in regard to them, others were of my opinion. Sir, there was never since England was England, such a stratagem and mask made to deceive England with as is this of the treaty of peace."

To Walsyngham again, on June 23, he wrote:—"Let her Majesty trust no more to Judas kisses; for let her assure herself there is no trust to French King nor Duke of Parma. Let her defend herself like a noble and mighty prince, and trust to her sword and not to their word, and then she need not fear, for her good God will defend her."

And on the same day he wrote to the queen herself, urging her to "Awake thoroughly and see the villainous treasons round about you, against your Majesty and your realm, and draw your forces round about you, like a mighty prince, to defend you."

This is not the language of a man who is merely the mouthpiece of another's opinion.

Meanwhile the Spanish fleet had sailed from Lisbon, and the accounts of it which had reached England were grossly exaggerated. Partly, it may be, because the spies felt bound to give abundant measure for their pay, and partly because Lisbon was itself deceived and had dubbed the Armada "the invincible." Many causes, however, had combined to lessen both its numbers and its efficiency. Of these, by far the most serious was the death of its appointed general, the Marquis of Santa Cruz, the only

man in Spain who by birth was entitled, and by experience was competent, to command such an expedition.

His name was encircled with a halo of naval victory, but the king does not seem to have realized the importance of his loss. It had, indeed, appeared that Santa Cruz was by no means ready to act as subordinate to the Duke of Parma, and it is quite possible that the king was almost relieved by the solution of the difficulty which Santa Cruz's death offered.

The vacant command was given to the Duke of Medina Sidonia, whose only qualifications for such a post were his distinguished birth, and the fact that he would readily submit to the control of Parma. He was totally ignorant of naval affairs, and although personally brave his total want of experience and of knowledge rendered him a timid and undecided commander. It is to his credit that he told the king how unfit he was for the appointment, but the king insisted that he should accept it, and he obeyed.

Another and very important, though less serious, difficulty in the way of the war was the want of money. It is true that the origin of the war was certainly political and commercial, but it is equally true that religious differences intensified the hostile feeling, and that zeal for the Catholic Church, stimulated by the pope's promise of a million crowns, had a powerful influence on Philip's determination.

Notwithstanding the gold and silver continually coming into the country, Spain was poor in comparison with what might have been expected. The drain of the war in the Low Countries, the extravagance at court, and an utter want of economy throughout every department of the country, had already compelled Philip to abandon Santa Cruz's scheme for the invasion of England with a

fleet of upwards of 500 ships and transports, and an army of 100,000 men. For such a gigantic venture the revenue was hopelessly insufficient.

If, however, the papal subsidy had been forthcoming Philip would have been in a much more comfortable position. But the pope refused to pay a single crown until the army was landed in England, and the practical certainty that even then no crowns would be handed over, rendered a further limitation of the scheme necessary. Nevertheless, as the fleet at last sailed from Lisbon on May 20, it was really formidable, both in the number and size of the ships.

But, notwithstanding the lavish expenditure, the equipment was faulty in the extreme. The victuals—the fame of which for quantity and quality had gone abroad through Europe—were very bad; partly from the difficulty of getting together the large supplies required, but principally from the dishonesty of the agents. Before the fleet had been many days at sea the bread was found to be mouldy, and the beef to be rotten. Much of it had to be thrown overboard. Both provisions and water had run short, and the men were very sickly.

The ships, too, were severely strained. They were overmasted, were manned by soldiers rather than sailors, and were built more for cargo than for fighting. For a fair run down the trades to the West Indies they would have been excellent, but with their lofty forecastles, and poop above poop almost to the height of the maintop they were exceedingly cumbrous. Even in a light breeze they heeled over so much that working the guns was difficult, and firing them was uncertain.

But without this disadvantage the Spanish gunnery was very bad, and their guns, in comparison with the English, were small and few. Even of their largest and

best ships the armament was very inferior, and the weight of metal thrown in a broadside was barely sixty per cent of that of the corresponding English ships, while in very many of the ships which were counted as efficient men-of-war, the armament was merely nominal.

The fact seems to be, and is so stated by the Spanish historian, Captain Fernandez Duro, that "the cannon was held by the Spaniards to be an ignoble arm; well enough for the beginning of the fray and to pass away the time till the moment of engaging hand-to-hand. It was thus that the gunners were recommended to aim high, so as to dismantle the enemy and prevent his escape, but as it is difficult to hit a vertical stick, the result was that the shot were expended harmlessly in the sea, or at best made some holes in the sails, or cut a few ropes of no great consequence."

It was by hand-to-hand fighting that the Spaniards had won the victories on which their fame rested, and notably at Lepanto, the memory of which was still fresh in men's minds. But during the last thirty or forty years the English seamen had been learning to trust to off-fighting, to quickness in manœuvring, and to the great gun.

It was, as it had been 2,000 years before, in the wars between Athenians and Lacedaemonians; and now, as then, the arms carried by the ship proved superior to the arms carried by the men.

But in modern times it was a new thing in naval war, and although the English sailors had tried it on a small scale in many a casual encounter, it had not been seriously attempted in any general action.

To most of the Spaniards and to many of the English, the number and size of the Spanish ships, and the number and discipline of the Spanish soldiers seemed in over-

whelming disproportion to the apparently small force of the English fleet. But the English seamen knew that they really had the advantage, and some of the Spaniards realized that it might be difficult to grapple the English ships and to engage in hand-to-hand fighting.

Very few of the Spaniards understood that the great guns in the hands of the English were terrible weapons, how terrible they learned to their cost as soon as the fleets met.

After having put into Corunna to refit, re-provision, and to land their sick men, the Spaniards sailed again on July 12, 1588, and came off Plymouth on the 21st. They came up channel in what has been described as a half-moon, but was apparently a line abreast, with the wings thrown back.

The English fleet had been watching off Ushant, but being short of victuals had run back before the same fresh southerly wind which had brought the Spaniards across the Bay of Biscay.

The English ships had just come in and were engaged in provisioning, when the news arrived that the Spaniards were off the Lizard. The mischance, which Howard had foreseen and tried so hard to prevent, had happened. The enemy had appeared on the coast when the English ships were short of victuals.

Howard would not wait; but, with the failing supplies he had on board, he warped out of the harbour against the south-westerly wind, and creeping to windward under the land, he attacked the Spanish rear, and more especially the left wing or rear-guard, on the morning of Sunday, the 21st of July.

The unequal conditions of the combat were at once proved. Unable either to close with the English or to offer any effective return to the fire, the Spaniards huddled



together and pursued their way up Channel. Two of their best ships that were disabled fell into the hands of the English.

The one idea of Medina Sidonia was to join hands with Parma and be relieved of further responsibility. But he did not try to separate the transports and store-ships from the heavily-armed vessels. All of these ships carried a strong detachment of soldiers, and were, from the Spanish point of view, effective fighting ships.

But they were quite ineffective unless they could grapple with the English, and as the English ships were both faster and more skilfully handled, the manner of fighting was in the discretion of the English, and the Spaniards were helpless.

In all ships of that day the ports were very small. Training, elevation, and depression were scarcely attempted, and the guns were laid horizontal and brought to bear by the action of the helm. The superiority of manœuvring thus gave an enormous advantage to the English. And this was intensified by the crankness of the Spanish ships, which pointed their guns either towards the sky or towards the bottom of the sea, but seldom towards the English ships, which were very rarely hit.

During the following days the engagement was renewed off Portland and the Isle of Wight, with the result that the Spaniards suffered severely, the English not at all.

Off the Isle of Wight, according to Sir George Carey, the governor of the island, "the fight continued from five of the clock till ten [in the morning], with so great expenditure of powder and bullet, that during this time the shot continued so thick together that it might rather have been judged a skirmish with small shot on land than a fight with great shot on sea. In which conflict,

thanks be to God, there hath not been two of our men hurt."

Of the Spanish losses we have no satisfactory account, but we know that one large ship escaped in the night and got over to Havre, where, trying to shelter in the river, she ran ashore and was broken up.

By the time they arrived off Calais the Spaniards felt that they were beaten, and though they still hoped to be joined by the Duke of Parma, they were rather looking to him for protection, than counting themselves as the force which was to protect the army of invasion.

It needed but the appearance of a few hastily-fitted fire-ships to scare them from their anchors. And on the next day, the 29th of July, they were fairly brought to action off Gravelines.

They had arrived at the destined end of their voyage. To go farther would have been to confess the failure of the expedition. They were forced to stay and fight, and many of them, at least, fought most bravely.

" There lacked not men of prowess,
Nor men of lordly race,
For all *Hispania's* noblest
Were round the fatal place."

But the odds were heavily against them. The wind was blowing fresh, and the Armada streamed off before it. When their weathermost ships were attacked, those to leeward could render no assistance. The weathermost ships were their largest and best, but not more than thirty-two seem to have been actually engaged, and the brunt of the fighting fell on some fifteen.

Of this critical, though in fact very one-sided, battle, we have a most graphic account in a letter of Wynter's



THE DEFEAT OF THE SPANISH ARMADA

From an engraving

to Walsyngham, written on August 1. After describing the capture of the great galliass which was stranded before Calais, he continues:

“After the lord admiral perceived that our men, had got possession of her, then, with such as were with him he bore up after the Spanish fleet, the wind being at SSW and the Spanish fleet bearing away NNE, making into the depth of the channel; and about nine of the clock in the morning, we fetched near unto them, being then abreast of Gravelines. They went into the form of a half-moon. . . . My fortune was to make choice to charge their starboard wing, without shooting off any ordnance until we came within six-score paces of them, and some of our ships did follow me. The said wing found themselves, as it appeared, so charged, that in making haste to run into the body of their fleet, four of them entangled themselves, one aboard the other. One of them recovered himself, and so sheltered himself among the fleet. How the others were beaten, I will leave to the report of some of the Spaniards that leapt into the sea and were taken up and are now in the custody of some of our fleet.

“The fight continued from nine of the clock [in the morning] till six of the clock at night. . . . No doubt the spoil and harm that was done to them was great. I deliver it to your Honour, upon the credit of a poor gentleman, that out of my ship there were shot 500 shot of demi-cannon, culverin and demi-culverin (32, 18, and 9 pounders); and when I was furthest off in discharging any of the pieces, I was not out of shot of their harquebus, and most times within speech of one another. And surely every man did well; and, as I have said, no doubt the slaughter and hurt they received was great, as time will show; and when every man was weary with labour, and our cartridges and ammunition expended—I think

in some altogether—we ceased and followed the enemy, he bearing away still in the course as I have said before.”

There is no doubt that the Spaniards were thoroughly beaten, but at this time neither Howard nor Drake saw this so clearly as Wynter. Drake thought that the decisive battle had yet to be fought, and with full confidence in the result wrote to Walsyngham on the 31st:

“With the grace of God, if we live, I doubt not but ere it be long so to handle the matter with the Duke of Sidonia that he shall wish himself at St Mary Port among his orange trees.”

And Howard, on the very evening of the battle, had already written to the same effect:

“[All day] until this evening late, we have chased them in fight and distressed them much; but their fleet consists of mighty ships and great strength; yet we doubt not, by God’s good assistance, to oppress them. . . . Their force is wonderful great and strong; and yet we pluck their feathers by little and little.”

But even when the enemy were seen flying to the north, both Howard and Drake feared that they might return after refitting in some of the Danish ports. Howard, too, was painfully conscious of the wants of his own fleet. He knew that his ships were very short of both victuals and powder. But for this he would have attacked the flying enemy on the next day. As it was, he could only “set on a brag countenance” and follow.

One of the most persistent fictions of history is that this most inopportune want of powder was due to the meanness of the queen, who cut short the supply on the ground of expense. But the truth is that not only had the ships more than was customary, but had, amongst them, all that was available in the kingdom.

During the previous months Walsyngham had been

vainly trying to buy more in the Low Countries, though not perhaps for the ships. For neither he, nor Burghley, nor others of the queen's advisers, could see that more than the large supply already on board could be wanted. Of naval war, they knew nothing beyond what they had read in their histories, and they could not understand that a new phase of it, outside all former experience, was being developed.

As early as March 30 Drake had warned the council that "the supply of powder for our great ordnance in her Majesty's ships is sufficient for only one day and a half's service, if it be begun and continued as the service may require." But the Council, either from a want of faith or want of means, did not remedy the defect.

If it is right for civilians and landsmen to control the expenditure of naval stores, they were, possibly, justified in their disbelief, for the expenditure in the battles was great beyond precedent, as is fully shown by a letter of Howard's on August 8: "Some Spaniards that we have taken, that were in the fight of Lepanto, say that the worst of our four fights that we have had with them far exceeded the fight they had there; and they say that in some of our fights we had fired twenty times as much great shot as they had there."

That this ignorance on the part of the council was a ruling factor of their policy, is evident from the instruction given to their messenger, who was sent to the admiral on July 31 to ask as to the causes "why the Spanish navy has not been boarded by the queen's ships"?

"For though", it continued, "some of the ships of Spain may be thought too huge to be boarded by the English, yet some of the queen's ships are thought very able to have boarded divers of the meaner ships of the Spanish navy."

The answer may well have been that though some of the Spanish ships were too huge to be boarded, none of them were too huge to be pounded with great shot till they went to the bottom. It was doubtless this official question, or the train of thought which dictated it, that was in Raleigh's mind when, some twenty years later, he wrote:

"He that will happily perform a fight at sea, must believe that there is more belonging to a good man of war* upon the waters than great daring, and must know that there is a great deal of difference between fighting loose or at large and grappling. To clap ships together without consideration belongs rather to a madman than to a man of war; for by such an ignorant bravery was Peter Strozzi lost at the Azores when he fought against the Marquis of Santa Cruz.

"In like manner had the Lord Charles Howard, Admiral of England, been lost in the year 1588, if he had not been better advised than a great many malignant fools were, who found fault with his demeanour. The Spaniards had an army aboard and he had none; they had more ships than he had, and of higher building and charging; so that had he entangled himself with those great and powerful vessels, he had greatly endangered this kingdom of England. . . . But our admiral knew his advantage and held it; which, had he not done, he had not been worthy to have held his head."

For a man of Raleigh's genius to be wise after the event was a small matter. It was Howard's special merit to be wise before it. And however much he owed to the counsels of Drake and his followers, Howard deserves the greatest credit for adopting and, in the face of power-

* In its literal meaning of "a fighting man"; not a ship.

ful opposition, for adhering to the tactics which not only avoided defeat, but ensured victory.

After following the Armada as far as the latitude of the Firth of Forth, and seeing that the Spaniards made no attempt to turn south, and that, with the fresh south-westerly wind blowing, they could not make the coast of Scotland, Howard felt that he had done all that his lack of powder and of victuals permitted. It does not appear that there was any serious suffering from want of food, but the dread of it compelled him to return.

And so, leaving the Spanish ships, with their putrid victuals, their scarcity of water, their hulls shattered, their rigging cut and their anchors left in Calais roads, to go to their doom in the northern or western seas, Howard took the fleet safely back to Harwich and the Thames.

There a more deadly enemy than Spaniards was waiting for them. Already, while at Plymouth, a terrible pestilence had raged on board several of the ships. And in spite of efforts to get rid of it, the contagion remained. Now, when the excitement of the battle was over, the pestilence broke out with greater virulence than ever.

The men died by hundreds. The sick were sent ashore at Margate, but no lodging, no medical attendance, and no proper diet were provided. Howard did his best, and at his own cost got food and lodging. "But the best I can get", he wrote to Burghley, "is barns and such out-houses, and the relief is small that I can provide for them here. It would grieve any man's heart to see them that have served so valiantly to die so miserably."

Before the plague was stayed the ships' companies were weakened by 30, 40, or even 50 per cent. And there was some anxiety as to what was to be done if the Armada should return.

During the following years Howard had no active share

in the operations of the war. But as lord admiral he was the head of the administration of the navy, and in 1590, together with Hawkyns and Drake, he instituted the grand naval charity, long known as "the Chest at Chatham," which was afterwards merged in Greenwich Hospital.

It was not until 1596, when the Spaniards were again preparing a formidable armada to renew the attempt on England, that Elizabeth, adopting the policy so strenuously urged by Howard in 1588, resolved to attack them in their own ports. For this purpose she appointed the lord admiral and the Earl of Essex joint commanders of an expedition against Cadiz.

Their authority, as given by their commission, was equal, but Essex, as an earl, was named first. Then, and for long afterwards, civil rank took precedence over military.

On June 21 the fleet forced its way into Cadiz Harbour, the Spanish ships flying towards Puerto Real. Two of the largest were captured and sent to England. Many of the others got on shore and were burnt. All would have been taken or destroyed, with their cargoes of immense value, had not Essex, by landing in too great haste, allowed many of the ships to escape.

The town was taken by storm and sacked, and the possibility of an immediate Spanish invasion was at an end. Essex wished to visit other ports along the coast but Howard, supported by the council of war, declared that their business was to destroy Spanish shipping, not to sack and plunder Spanish towns.

On their return to England, Howard was created Earl of Nottingham. But this expedition had aroused a strong feeling of antagonism between himself and Essex, which Howard's promotion intensified. Essex arrogantly



ROBERT DEVEREUX, EARL OF ESSEX

From a painting by an unknown artist in the National Portrait Gallery

claimed the whole merit of the service, and was boisterously indignant at the precedence which Howard now took. For a peer holding one of the highest offices of State took precedence of all others of the same degree.

The queen yielded to the demand of her favourite, and restored his precedence by appointing him earl-marshal. But the very bitter feeling between Howard and Essex remained.

It is possible that the high esteem in which Howard was held at Court was a factor in the insubordination and rebellion of Essex in 1601. And, on the other hand, it is likely that the remembrance of old insults did not make Howard, as one of Essex's judges, more inclined to be merciful.

As long as the war with Spain lasted Howard retained his appointment as commander-in-chief of the fleet. And in 1599 on the rumours of another armada preparing—prepared—actually sailed—for the invasion of this country, he had a commission as “lord-lieutenant-general of all England”, which gave him the command-in-chief of all the forces of the realm, by sea and by land. This almost regal authority he held for six weeks—sometimes afloat in the fleet, sometimes on shore with the army.

During the queen's last years he was very much in her confidence. It may well be that she recognized him as the one man about the Court who served her for love of herself and of his country. He had no petty greed nor ambition, for his birth, rank, office, and reputation left him nothing further to desire for himself.

On her death-bed the queen named to him the King of Scots as her successor, leaving to him the measures to be taken.

It is probable that Howard had already been in corres-

pondence with James, and from the first he held a high place in the king's favour. He was continued in his office of lord admiral, and was a member of every commission of any importance, notably for the trial of those concerned in the Gunpowder Plot, and for the negotiation of the peace with Spain.

In March 1605 he was sent to Spain as ambassador extraordinary, to interchange ratifications of the treaty. The splendour of his retinue and equipment dazzled the Spanish populace. His frank and liberal courtesy won all hearts. The renown of his military achievements cleared away every difficulty. On his return to England he continued as before, an adviser rather than a minister of the Crown—except in his office of lord admiral.

The last executive duty he undertook was to command, in 1613, the squadron which escorted the Princess Elizabeth to Flushing, on the occasion of her marriage to the Elector Palatine. The last commission on which he sat was one, in 1618, to revise the statutes of the Order of the Garter.

He was by this time an old man. Though he preserved his faculties to the last, it cannot be supposed that at the age of eighty-two he could attend to the details of his office; probably he had never considered it his duty to attend to them further than to receive the reports of his subordinates, and of the "Principal officers of the Navy", afterwards known as the Navy Board.

Certainly in 1618, and for many years before that date, he had left things very much in the hands of his subordinates; and in the reign of James I the hands of such men were dirty. Confusion reigned in every office which had to deal with money, and the admiralty was not an exception to the general rule.

Commissions were appointed to inquire into these

abuses; and on the report of the commission on the admiralty, Nottingham felt that the matter was beyond his failing powers. The Duke of Buckingham was eager to relieve him of his burden, and he retired with a pension of £1,000 a year. Various rich sinecures about the court he held until his death, at the age of eighty-eight, on December 13, 1624. His family in the male line, and with it the Nottingham title, became extinct in 1681.

It is impossible to conclude this memoir of the Earl of Nottingham without mentioning his religion—a point which, as a rule, is outside the limits of our consideration. But so much political capital has been made, or attempted to be made, out of the assertion that he was a Roman Catholic, that it is only right to say that the statement is an invention of the present century.

It is supported by no evidence whatever, indeed there is very strong, though indirect, evidence against it. But quite apart from any evidence, there is the presumption that a man known to be persistently guilty of high treason under the Statute 23 Eliz., c. i., could not have held the office of lord admiral of England.

It is altogether outside our object to inquire what Nottingham's doctrinal opinions were. The modern terms, Roman and Anglican Catholic, were not then used, and the distinction was between a "papist" and a "protestant." A papist being one who acknowledged the authority of the pope; a protestant being one who protested against it.

That Howard did not acknowledge the pope's authority is as certain as anything short of an affidavit can make it. But the following incidents, at widely different periods of his life, seem to show this quite clearly, and are perhaps not very generally known.

In February, 1588, a complaint was made to him that

the surgeon of a ship, commanded by Lord Sheffield, was a papist. Howard desired Sheffield to inquire into this, and wrote afterwards to Walsyngham that this man and three or four more suspected men had been examined on oath, and that "they utterly renounced the pope's authority." He continues that two or three years ago the surgeon "was something inclined to papistry," but had been "converted" by his wife's "honest" relatives. "I have talked with the man myself. He offers to receive [the Holy Communion] and do anything that a good protestant should do . . . And this I dare assure you: no man whosoever is readier to communicate than my Lord Sheffield is. . . ."

It can scarcely be alleged that Howard was a "papist" when he wrote this letter, or that he was one in 1623, when, as Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey, he reported to the Archbishop of Canterbury that John Monson was "a most dangerous papist", and that he had therefore committed him to the Gatehouse.

The question is only referred to here, because the assertion that Howard was a "catholic"—that is a "papist"—has been brought forward as an illustration of the loyalty and trustworthiness of the catholics as a body. But as Howard was assuredly not a catholic—in the sense of "papist"—his services do not illustrate or prove anything of the kind.



SIR FRANCIS DRAKE
From an engraving by Houbraken

II.

SIR FRANCIS DRAKE.

(1540-1596.)

AMONG the many commanders at sea which the reign of Queen Elizabeth produced, Drake stands out conspicuously by his daring exploits and force of character. His whole life reads like a romance, and is full both of interest and instruction. It shows how the skill, determination, and will of one man can influence those under him to attempt and bring to successful issue projects which, on the face of them, appear either foolhardy, or impossible of attainment.

Francis Drake, of a good though poor family, was born at Crowndale, near Tavistock, somewhere about 1540. From childhood he was brought up to the sea, at first in a coasting vessel, afterwards in voyages to Africa and the Spanish main.

In 1567 he commanded the "Judith" of 50 tons, one of a squadron fitted out by his kinsman, John Hawkyns. This squadron sailed from Plymouth on October 2. The object of the voyage was to capture negroes in Africa, carry them across the Spanish main, and there sell them to the planters, who, in spite of the authorities, were ready to buy them at a good price.

The adventure was most successful, and Hawkyns, with "vast treasure in gold, silver, and jewels", turned homewards. But it was late in the season, and owing to heavy gales the little squadron was finally driven to take refuge

in the harbour of San Juan de Lua, at that time the chief port of Mexico.

There, after having been allowed to begin their refit, they were treacherously attacked by an overwhelming Spanish force. After a fierce fight, Hawkyns's ship was set on fire. Two others, the "Angel" and "Swallow", were sunk. Hawkyns got on board the "Minion", which, with the "Judith", escaped though crowded with men and short of water and provisions. It was impossible to go on in such a state, so one hundred men volunteered to land and take their chance. They reached a Spanish station and were sent as prisoners to Mexico.

At first they were treated with kindness, and were gradually employed in the plantations, some of them even being placed in positions of trust and profit. But three years afterwards the Inquisition arrived, and these men—more especially those who had collected some money—were hunted out and tortured. Some of them were burnt, and some sent to Spain where they were handed over to the tender mercies of the Holy Office at Seville.

Gradually all of this leaked out, and throughout England there was a feeling of horror and anger that such atrocities could be perpetrated in the name of religion. To English sailors it became a solemn duty to avenge their comrades, and to fight the Spaniards whenever they could meet them.

The "Minion", which had lost most of her crew through sickness, and the "Judith" reached Plymouth towards the end of January. As soon as Drake arrived he was sent up to London to tell Sir William Cecil what had been done, and was thus brought to the notice of this great minister. All England rang with the gallant fight at San Juan de Lua, and the treachery of the Spaniards was vehemently denounced.



SIR JOHN HAWKINS

From an engraving

Drake, robbed of the fortune which had already seemed to be his, is supposed to have served during the summer as master of one of the queen's ships, whilst he tried to make up for some of the losses he had sustained.

But, "finding that no recompense could be recovered out of Spain by any of his own means, or by her Majesty's letters, he used such helps as he might, by two several voyages into the West Indies, in the years 1570 and 1571, to gain such intelligence as might further him to get some amends for his loss. And having in these two voyages gotten certain notice of the persons and places aimed at as he thought requisite, he thereupon, with good deliberation, resolved on a third voyage."

His equipment consisted of two small ships, the "Pasha" and "Swan", carrying seventy-three men, and also three pinnaces in pieces which could be easily put together. On May 24, 1572, he sailed from Plymouth, intending to attack Nombre de Dios, then "the granary of the West Indies, where the golden harvest brought from Peru and Mexico to Panama was hoarded up till it could be conveyed to Spain."

On July 6 they sighted the high land about Santa Maria, and having put into a secluded port on the coast they set up the pinnaces. At this port they were joined by an English barque with thirty men commanded by one James Ranse, and they put to sea on the 20th. At the Isle of Pines, they left Ranse and his men in charge of the ships, while Drake and his men embarked in the pinnaces and arrived off Nombre de Dios about three o'clock on the morning of July 29.

The surprise was complete, and they landed without opposition; but the Spaniards were speedily alarmed and mustered in the market-place. A sharp skirmish

resulted in the Spaniards being put to flight, but Drake was severely wounded in the thigh.

Some prisoners were then compelled to lead the English to the governor's house, where they found an enormous stack of silver bars, valued at over a million sterling. It was impossible to carry off a sufficient part of this in their small boats, but there still remained the treasure-house in which was stored the gold, pearls, and jewels. "More," said Drake to his followers, "than the pinnaces could carry."

They passed on to this treasure-house, but the Spaniards were rapidly gathering their forces. Drake's men were enormously outnumbered, and the danger of being surrounded and cut off from their boats was very great. Drake, however, would not hear of retreat. He told his men that he had brought them to the mouth of the "treasure of the world", and that if they did not take advantage of such a chance they must blame no one except themselves.

Then he ordered the door to be broken open; but as he stepped forward to keep back the crowd, he fainted from loss of blood. His followers, who did not know that he had been wounded, and thought that he was dead, lost heart and immediately picked him up and carried him down to the boats.

So this bold attempt failed, and the party returned to their ships dispirited and without spoils. Drake, however, was soon about again, and finding fresh work to do. Parting company from Ransel, he made for Cartagena, and captured a large ship in the very harbour. He also took and destroyed many other ships, and burned Porto Bello. Soon afterwards fever broke out among his men, and his brother Joseph died, and another brother, John, was killed. Owing to these disasters the two ships were

beyond the strength of the surviving men, and the "Swan" was scuttled. But through all these misfortunes Drake's courage never failed.

His next exploit, on February 3, 1573, was to leave the sick with a few sound men to attend to them, and to land on the isthmus with only eighteen men. Then having been joined by a party of Cimaroons, he set out to intercept the treasure trains as they crossed over from Panama to Nombre de Dios.

Vera Cruz was sacked, but little plunder was obtained to compensate for the excessive toil and danger they had gone through. On April 1, however, three caravans, with a load of nearly thirty tons of silver and a quantity of gold, were intercepted. As much as possible of this was carried away, and the rest was buried; but before they could return for this buried treasure the Spaniards had discovered it. After many adventures and hair-breadth escapes Drake and his men reached their ships, and arrived at Plymouth on August 9, 1573.

An incident of Drake's march across the isthmus gave a special direction to his thoughts. On February 11 he arrived at the top of a considerable eminence, where the chief of the Indians pointed out to him "a goodly and great high tree" in which they had cut steps to ascend by, and at the top was a kind of platform to hold about twelve men. Drake climbed up this tree and obtained a view of the Atlantic on one side, and of the Pacific on the other, the unknown waters of the latter ocean glittering in the sun as far as the eye could see.

Drake was, it is said, "so vehemently transported with desire to navigate that sea, that falling down there on his knees, he implored the Divine assistance, that he might at some time or other sail thither and make a perfect discovery of the same."

Though in consequence of his swoon at Nombre de Dios, Drake's ships did not return with the "treasure of the world", they had, nevertheless, brought home so much bullion that Drake's share of it made him a comparatively rich man.

For the next three years (1573-6) he served in Ireland, sometimes afloat, sometimes ashore, under the Earl of Essex; but his thoughts were always turned towards the great Southern Ocean, and after the Earl's death he began to make preparations for another voyage.

Already he had attracted the attention of Burghley, and had been allowed to tell some of his adventures to the queen herself. And it is not unlikely that, in guarded terms, he was encouraged to undertake further exploits. But the story that the queen told Drake that she was ready to subscribe 1000 crowns towards the expenses of an expedition to the South Sea, can scarcely be believed.

The queen might have been pleased to show Philip that he was to be wounded where he thought himself most secure. But neither then, nor for long afterwards, could she decide to be openly hostile to Spain, though she knew well enough that whenever men of the two nations met on the high seas, they fought as a matter of course.

This wavering policy, which led to the issue of undecided or contradictory orders, hampered every expedition that was undertaken under the queen's authority. But nothing could damp the spirit of adventure that was roused in the nation. And the cruel persecutions of the Inquisition caused such a hatred of the Spaniards, that every English sailor who took part in the expeditions sent forth by private enterprise, felt that he was engaged in a holy crusade.

With a good reputation and friends in high places,

Drake had no difficulty in collecting a squadron, which, small as it seems now, was quite strong enough according to the standard of the age. It consisted of the "Pelican", of 100 tons; the "Elizabeth", of 80 tons, commanded by Captain John Wynter; and three smaller vessels, the "Marigold", "Swan", and "Christopher."

These ships were well fitted out, and carried, as in former expeditions, some pinnaces in pieces, to be put together when required. Moreover Drake had no intention of "roughing it." His cabin furniture and his service of plate are described as luxurious. But these were not due so much to his personal taste as to his desire to impress "foreigners with the magnificence of his native country." The crews, all told, numbered about 170.

Drake himself was in the prime of strength, about thirty-five years of age, and full of energy and daring. He is described as "low of stature, but set and strong grown; a very religious man towards God and His honour, chaste in his life, just in his dealings, true of his word, merciful to those that were under him, and hating nothing so much as idleness."

After a false start, in which they were driven back by a storm, they finally sailed from Plymouth on December 13, 1577. In spite of England being full of Spanish spies, Drake's secret was well kept, for no one knew it outside the very small circle of the principal adventurers. Whether even Burghley knew it is very doubtful.

The report was circulated that they were bound to the Mediterranean; but it was not clear why ships bound to the Mediterranean should take such a heavy armament, so that this report was not believed. What the Spaniards reported to Philip was that something was going to be attempted in the West Indies, not improbably against *Nombre de Dios*.

It does not seem that anyone in the squadron itself supposed that this enterprise, though on a larger scale than usual, was of an extraordinary character. The former failure at Nombre de Dios was explanation enough of the greater force that had been mustered. Not until they had passed the Cape Verd Islands were the men told that they were bound to the coast of Brazil. In case of separation the ships were to meet at the River Plate.

When further it became known that Drake intended from the Plate to pass through the Straits of Magellan and cross the Pacific Ocean, the news was not very welcome.

A raid through the West Indies or on the Spanish main was one thing, but a prolonged voyage in unknown seas was another to which many in the squadron were strongly opposed. And some, at any rate, of the grumblers were of the better class—gentlemen volunteers who dreaded the discomforts and hardships which they foresaw.

There may, however, have been other reasons. Some of the gentlemen who had served as soldiers may have thought that it was their place to command rather than obey, and that it was altogether beneath their dignity to obey mere seamen. It is suggested, too, that personal quarrels or political intrigues may have complicated the question. But it is impossible to speak with any certainty.

Amongst the volunteers was one, Thomas Doughty, who is said to have served with Drake in Ireland, to have been on familiar terms with him, and to have embarked upon this voyage as his friend. Doughty is described as a man of education. It may have been that he had been a Templar before he was a soldier, and thus had become a sea-lawyer, a calling most obnoxious to a sailor.

Doughty seems to have imagined that he commanded the soldiers of the expedition, as Drake commanded the sailors, and to have considered that his authority was equal to Drake's. But amidst much lying and false witness it is impossible to speak positively of any of the details. The bare facts appear fairly certain. Shortly after leaving St Iago, Doughty, as Drake's friend, was put in command of a Portuguese prize. In this position his overbearing conduct excited discontent. And when he was removed first to one ship and then to another, he tried to rouse a feeling against Drake. He told the men that they were being hurried to their death, that supernatural powers were fighting against them, and that to continue the voyage was to fly in the face of the Almighty.

It has been said that he had shipped solely for the purpose of putting a stop to the voyage, but it is known that, until they had passed the Cape Verd Islands, Drake had no suspicion of his hostility. The likelihood is that his anger was caused by his removal from the prize-ship, and by his dislike of having to undertake a more adventurous voyage than he had expected. That he tried to create a mutiny and to make Drake a prisoner, possibly even to kill him and to return to England, seems to have been proved. Drake, at any rate, believed this, and at Port St Julian, a small bay to the north of the Straits of Magellan, Doughty was brought to trial by a court composed of all the principal men of the squadron. Doughty was found guilty, and the court decided that "they could by no means, with their safety, let him live."

The place was of evil omen. It was there that Magellan had been compelled to crush a dangerous mutiny by hanging one of his captains and putting three others to death in a less formal manner. The remains

of the gallows were still standing. So on one of the last days of June, 1578, Doughty was ordered to prepare for execution. In every way it was an extraordinary scene. Doughty had played and lost in a game where life was at stake. Like a gentleman he was prepared to pay his debt. And Drake, who had won, acquitted him of personal offence. Side by side they knelt and received the Communion, and afterwards "dined also at the same table together, as cheerfully in sobriety as ever in their lives they had done aforetime, each cheering up the other, and taking their leave by drinking to each other, as if some journey had only been in hand."

Then, after some private conference with Drake, the condemned man was led to the place of execution, and, with all due form, beheaded. Drake calling out, as the head fell, "Lo! this is end of traitors."

The bad weather of the winter detained the ships at St Julian's, but Doughty's execution failed to kill the jealousy between the sailors and the gentlemen. Weeks passed by, and seeing that the disorder was not likely to cure itself, Drake came to the conclusion that he must interfere.

So on Sunday, August 10, he usurped the preacher's place with a "Soft, Master Fletcher, I must preach this day myself." And when all the men were assembled he addressed them in a speech that has long been classical. After speaking of the difficulties before them, and of the necessity of harmony and the danger of discord, he continued:

"Here is such controversy between the sailors and the gentlemen, and such stomaching between the gentlemen and sailors that it doth even make me mad to hear it. But I must have it left. I must have the gentleman to haul and draw with the mariner and the mariner with the

gentleman. Let us show ourselves all to be of a company, and let us not give occasion to the enemy to rejoice at our decay and overthrow. I would know him* that would refuse to set his hand to a rope; but I know that there is not any such here. And as gentlemen are necessary for government's sake in the voyage, so have I shipped them to that and to some further intent; and yet though I know sailors to be the most envious people in the world and so unruly without government, yet may I not be without them."

With more words to similar effect, he ended by offering the "Marigold" to carry the faint-hearted back to England. "But let them take heed," he said, "that they go homeward. For if I find them in my way I will surely sink them." Then all the men protested their willingness to go on, and a week later the little squadron sailed from Port Julian. In laying down the rule that the gentlemen must work with the mariners, that he would have no class distinction, Drake was merely preaching his own practice, well known to his hearers. Master Fletcher, the preacher and historian of the voyage, after telling how Drake, whilst away in a small boat before they put into St Julian, had been nearly lost by sudden fog and bad weather, continued:

"Our general, especially in matters of moment, was never wont to rely on other men's care, however trusty or skilful they might seem to be; but always, scorning danger and refusing no toil, he was wont himself to be first, whoever was second, at every turn where courage, skill, or industry was to be employed; neither would he intrust the discovery of these dangers to another, but rather to his own experience in searching out and sounding of them."

* Let me see the man that will refuse, etc.

The two small vessels, the "Christopher" and the "Swan", and the Portuguese prize had been broken up for firewood, as they were considered to be useless for the dangers now to be met. And these dangers were of a nature to give pause to the boldest.

No English ship had as yet passed Magellan's Straits, and for the last fifty years the Spaniards had avoided them as too perilous. Cape Horn was undiscovered. Tierra del Fuego was thought to be part of a solid continent which extended to the Antarctic Pole, with a single channel through it giving access to the Pacific Ocean. There were no charts. It was known that Magellan had passed through, and that was all.

But still they sailed, as they said, "in great hope of a happy issue to our enterprise which Almighty God had hitherto so blessed and prospered." On August 20 they were at the entrance of the Straits. Here Drake caused the ships to strike their topsails in honour to the queen, and changed the name of his ship from the "Pelican" to the "Golden Hind", after the crest of his friend and patron, Sir Christopher Hatton.

They got through the Straits in a remarkably short time, for they were in the Pacific Ocean on September 6, only seventeen days from the time they entered the Straits. This record was not beaten by a sailing ship for more than 250 years. Wallis in 1766 took 121 days; Carteret, in the same year, 119. It was not until 1843 that the "Fisgard," commanded by Captain Duntz, got through in sixteen days.

In one account we are told that Drake had Spanish charts. If this is so, they seem to have been quite useless, for the same writer says: "We, following the directions of the common maps of the Spaniards, were utterly deceived; for, of malicious purpose, they had made the

maps false that they might deceive strangers." But with regard to this statement it must be said that there was not a Spaniard living who knew anything about the passage. After leaving the Straits, the intention was to push on for a warmer climate, but in the so-called Pacific Ocean their good fortune deserted them, and for six weeks they were battered to and fro by bitter and fierce winds. On September 20, the little "Marigold" foundered with her captain and crew of twenty-eight men.

From September 7 until October 7 no land was seen, and they were blown as far south as Lat. 57°, and then back again until near the entrance of the Straits. There they were almost wrecked in trying to find an anchorage. Soon afterwards the "Elizabeth" parted company, and, managing to get into the Straits again, Wynter called a council and proposed to return to England. Wynter believed that Drake had been lost, and, disheartened by their terrible experiences, he overruled his men who wished to go on, and finally reached England in June of the following year, 1579.

Meanwhile Drake, in the "Golden Hind", was driven south again by another gale, and was forced, as it were, to make his great discovery of Cape Horn. Hitherto the idea had been that there was land as far as the South Pole, and that Magellan's Straits was the only route from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and *vice versâ*. Magellan himself had stated this, and had named the land to the southward Terra Incognita. The Spaniards, besides giving out that the only passage into the Pacific from the east was through the Straits of Magellan, had also declared that there was a strong and constant current running through the Straits from west to east. When we remember that there was practically no reliable information to be obtained about this passage, and that the sole object

of the Spaniards was to make it appear unapproachable, it is possible to form an idea of the dauntless spirit of adventure that animated Drake and his men. And through all their adventures they were supported by the sense of religion and belief in a protecting Providence, as is proved by the following sentence:

“Now as were fallen to the uttermost parts of these islands [to the southward of Tierra del Fuego], on the 28th October, 1578, our troubles did made an end, the storm ceased, and all our calamities (only the absence of our friends excepted) were removed, as if God all this while by His secret Providence had led us to make this discovery, which, being made according to His will, He stayed His hand.”

In his solitary ship Drake now shaped his course along the land to Lat. 30°, which was the rendezvous appointed in the Pacific. It is well to think of the audacity of the man, who, in that poor little craft, with but sixty men on board, started to cruise along a coast of which he knew nothing except through misleading rumours—a coast, moreover, that had been conquered and more or less settled by the Spaniards for forty years, and where he would now be sure to find large numbers of Spanish soldiers and many Spanish ships larger than his own. It was, indeed, perilous work, with no loophole for escape in case of failure.

Drake and his company, however, did not stop to think of the danger. They coasted along, landing occasionally to get water and birds, and so they continued their voyage to the north, looking out anxiously for the “Elizabeth” as they neared the rendezvous. Of course, they did not find the “Elizabeth”, but they had news of a great galleon lying at Valparaiso. They sailed into the bay, and the Spanish seamen, who could

not believe that strangers could have come into these waters, were preparing a friendly reception. Indeed, they were only undeceived when the "Golden Hind" ranged up alongside, and the English sailors leaped on board.

Taken entirely by surprise, the Spaniards could make no resistance, and after Drake had landed and carried off what booty he could find, he went off to sea with his prize and "rummaged" her.

Continuing their northerly course, they called at Coquimbo for water, but the Spaniards, coming down in force, drove them back, with the loss of one man. A post was sent off by land to Peru, to give warning that enemies were on the coast, but travelling was so bad that Drake was there a month before the warning arrived. They now put together a pinnace, which, as they sailed north, kept close inshore, searching for water. At Iquique they found an unsuspecting Spaniard lying asleep near the landing-place, and relieved him of thirteen bars of silver which were lying by him. A little further on they met a Spaniard and an Indian boy driving llamas, on which were bound leathern bags of refined silver. These bags were transferred to the hold of the ship, and also some silver found in two barques at Arica was taken.

On February 15 they arrived at Callao, the principal port of Peru, and anchored at night in the middle of a great number of Spanish ships. Next morning there was a panic, and practically no resistance. So, after overhauling the ships and taking out their valuables, their masts were cut away and also their cables, so that all possibilities of pursuit might be prevented. Already the plunder they had collected was very great, but when news was obtained that a galleon, richly laden, had sailed for Panama, they wasted no time in following

her. Next day they were off, carrying all sail when there was a wind, and towing with the boats when it was calm. On February 20 they were off Payta, and looked in; also at the entrance of Guayaquil River on the 24th. Drake promised a gold chain to the man who first sighted the treasure-ship, and this was won by a kinsman of his own, who sighted her near Cape San Francisco on March 1. By peculiarities in her rig, which they had heard of at Callao, she was recognized as the ship they were looking out for. Quite unconscious of any danger, she was jogging slowly and comfortably to her destination.

The little ship coming up astern was thought to be a friend, and glad of company on that lonely ocean, the galleon shortened sail to wait for her. Knowing, however, that if he approached the Spaniard by daylight, he would be recognized as a stranger, and therefore as an enemy, Drake, while carrying a press of sail, as though eager to join her, effectually checked the speed of his ship by towing some casks astern.

At dusk these casks were cut adrift, and the "Golden Hind" quickly coming up to the galleon, ranged up alongside and hailed her to "heave to." When no attention was paid to this unexpected demand, a broadside followed that brought down the galleon's mainmast. The galleon's captain was wounded, and, completely taken by surprise, the ship surrendered.

The full value of the spoil was never precisely confessed. Whether even the queen knew is doubtful. Twenty-six tons of coined silver and about one hundred-weight of gold were admitted, but there was a further mass of which no account was rendered, besides a great store of pearls, emeralds, and diamonds.

The two ships remained together for six days, and during that time the wounded Spanish captain, who was

kindly treated by Drake, amused himself by studying the manner of the people who had captured him. He thought that the "Golden Hind" was admirably appointed and thoroughly seaworthy, and he observed that Drake was greatly feared and revered by all on board.

Drake seems to have spoken freely of his voyage, and remarked to the Spanish captain:

"I know that the viceroy will send for thee to inform himself of my proceedings. Thou mayst tell him he shall do well to put no more Englishmen to death, and to spare those four he has now in his hands, for if he do execute them they shall cost the life of two thousand Spaniards."

Having cleared the galleon, Drake restored her to her captain, and then shaped a course to the north. Suspecting that the Spaniards would be watching for him if he returned by the Straits of Magellan, he proposed to his ship's company that they should try and find the passage to the Atlantic through North America.

He was right about the Spaniards. After his visit to Callao the viceroy had hastily fitted out three ships, embarked 250 men in them, and sent them in pursuit. They did not arrive at the place where Drake took the galleon until twenty days too late, but it does not appear as if they were very anxious to arrive in time.

Discovering that Drake had not gone to Panama, they concluded that he had turned to go home by the Straits of Magellan, and so they went south to look for him.

Meanwhile Drake was going north, capturing on his way one ship, laden with silk stuffs, porcelain, etc., and another, from which he obtained what was at the time more valuable to him, namely, a pilot and chart of the

China seas. They also surprised Guatulco, and, holding some of the chief men as hostages, they filled up with water and provisions.

Between April 16 and June 3 they ran 4,200 miles, and found themselves in Lat. 42° N. Then they began to suffer terribly from cold, and, in the words of the preacher, "a great discouragement seized upon the minds of our men." Drake persisted for some time, but at last the idea of going further north had to be abandoned.

They put into a creek near the modern San Francisco, where the natives were friendly, and seemed to have considered that they were receiving a visit from the gods. Their king invested Drake with full authority over the country, which "our general named Albion (or, as it was generally written, New Albion), and that for two causes; the one in respect of the white banks and cliffs which lie toward the sea; the other that it might have some affinity even in name to our own country, which was sometimes so called."

On July 23, 1579, much to the sorrow of the natives, Drake sailed from New Albion, and not caring to run any more risks with his precious cargo, he decided to return by the Cape of Good Hope. The charts which he had found in his prizes now became most valuable, and by their help and his own skill he hoped to find his way.

For sixty-eight days they ran on without seeing land, and then came to some islands, probably some of the Caroline group. On November 3 they sighted the Moluccas and called at Ternate; and after six days they started to feel their way through the dangerous reefs and shoals, among which they were entangled for a month.

On January 10, 1580, just as they were thinking that they were clear of dangers, they stuck fast on one of

the coral reefs that rise like a wall out of the deep waters. Drake sounded to see if an anchor could be laid out, but even at a boat's length from the ship no bottom could be found. Luckily, however, for them, the wind was light and the sea smooth, and after the ship had been lightened and the wind had shifted, they slipped off into deep water without much damage. For two months more they beat about among the islands until they found a convenient harbour and kind people in the island of Java. There they cleaned off the barnacles with which the bottom of the ship was overgrown, and on March 26 they sailed again.

Passing through the Straits of Sunda, they met the great ocean swell, and knew that at last they were clear of coral reefs. No land was seen for nearly two months, and then they made the African coast about where Natal is now. And so past the Cape, and past Sierra Leone, until on September 26, 1580—

“We safely, with joyful minds and thankful hearts to God, arrived at Plymouth, the place of our first setting forth, after we had spent two years ten months, and some few odd days in seeing the wonders of the Lord in the deep, in discovering so many admirable things, in going through with so many strange adventures, in escaping so many dangers, and overcoming so many difficulties in this our encompassing of this globe, and passing round the world.”

Eighteen months had passed since Drake had been heard of, beyond a rumour that he had been taken by the Spaniards and hanged. Wynter had brought the news that the “Golden Hind” had passed into the Pacific, but it seemed probable that she had been lost in a gale. Later on, however, news from the Viceroy of Mexico had caused the Spanish ambassador to lay

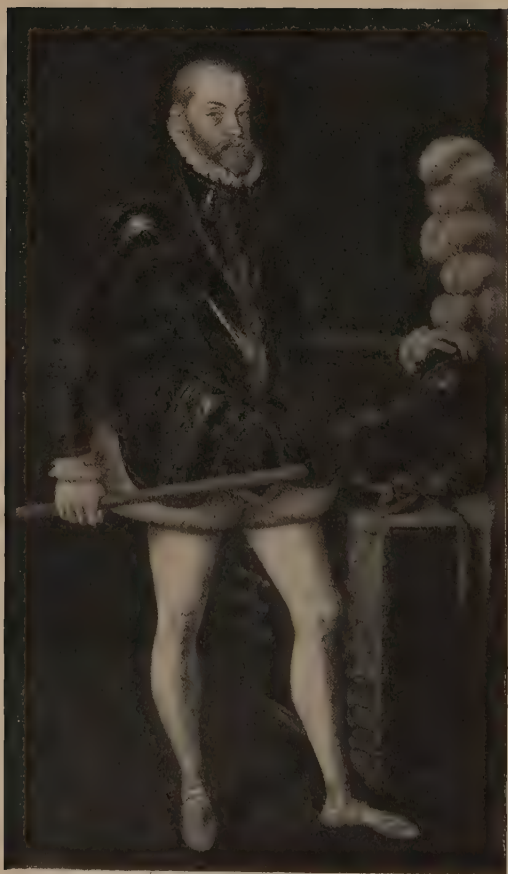
formal complaints of Drake's doings before the queen. The queen seems to have answered that Drake was a private adventurer, and that he should be punished if he ever came home, and little more was then thought of the matter.

But Drake's sudden appearance revived the subject. A shout of admiration rose over the whole country. There was no mistaking the feeling of the nation. The queen hesitated, but she wrote to Edmund Tremayne at Plymouth to assist Drake in sending up certain bullion brought into the realm. In replying Tremayne mentioned that the value was reported to be a million and a half sterling.

At the same time an inquiry was made into Drake's conduct, the depositions of the whole ship's company tending to prove that he was not guilty of any barbarity. Many, however, clamoured against Drake, but the queen at last inclined to the popular side.

The Spanish ambassador, who demanded restitution of the property and punishment of the offenders, was told that the Spaniards, by ill treatment of her subjects and by prohibiting commerce, had provoked these measures. Further, the queen informed him that Drake should answer for his misdeeds, if he should be shown to have committed any, and that she considered that a large part of the treasure was due to her on account of money spent in subduing rebellions, set on foot by the Spaniards, both in England and Ireland.

Above all, she absolutely denied the claims of the Spaniards to the whole of America by virtue of the gift of the Bishop of Rome, or their right or power over the people of other nations trading or colonizing in parts which they had not settled. And, finally, she stated that the oceans must be permitted to be navigated freely,



KING PHILIP II OF SPAIN

From a painting by Alonso Sanchez Coello in the National Portrait Gallery

"seeing that the use of sea and air is common to all, and neither nature nor public use nor custom permit any possession thereof."

So Drake went to London and told his adventures to the queen. His little ship went round to Deptford, and on April 4, 1581, on her deck, Queen Elizabeth knighted the first man of any nation who had commanded through such a voyage. For many years the "Golden Hind" was preserved at Deptford as a monument of the voyage.

During 1582 Drake was Mayor of Plymouth, and largely, if not entirely, at his own expense, constructed the leat which supplied Plymouth with water. He also sat in Parliament as member for Bossiney, 1584-5.

All this time affairs with Spain were seething. Philip was gathering ships and preparing to invade England. But he was by no means determined, and the queen was unwilling to do anything to force his hand. It was so much simpler (and cheaper) for her to let the war wage itself at the cost and risk of her loving subjects. This explains, in a measure, the apparent timidity of her conduct, in spite of the representations that were made to her.

But in 1585 the King of Spain laid an embargo on all English ships and goods found in his country, and the queen had to act. She replied by letters of reprisal, and by ordering the equipment of a fleet of twenty-five sail "to avenge the wrongs offered to her, and to resist the King of Spain's preparations."

Drake was in command in the "Elizabeth Bonaventure", and had with him Frobiser as vice-admiral. Ten companies of soldiers were embarked. From various causes, however, the expedition was delayed, and both Burghley and Walsyngham were afraid that the queen might, after all, countermand it.

Privately Burghley sent word to Drake that he had better get away at once if he wanted to go at all, and on September 14 the fleet sailed. They took possession of St Iago, and utterly destroyed it, in revenge for the murder and mutilation of a ship's boy, who had strayed away and been caught. Then the squadron made for the West Indies. On New Year's Day, 1586, they landed in force on Hispaniola, and took and ransomed the town of San Domingo. Thence they passed on to Cartagena, which they took after a sharp struggle, and ransomed after they had spent six weeks there.

Soon afterwards yellow fever broke out, and nothing except Drake's personal influence, courage, and energy kept the expedition together. Out of the original strength of 2,500 men, only 700 remained fit for duty, and Drake, who had intended to attack Nombre de Dios, and then to march across the Isthmus to Panama, was reluctantly compelled to turn homewards.

On the way they called at the Virginian colony which had been founded the year before, largely at the cost of Sir Walter Raleigh. Drake proposed to give stores to the colonists and also to leave them a small vessel. But so utterly disheartened were they that they begged to be taken back to England. With the colonists on board, the squadron arrived at Portsmouth on July 28, 1586.

The booty brought home was small; but, from the point of view of impending war, the destruction of the Spanish settlements, and the heavy blow to Spanish trade, produced a great effect, and the effect would probably have been even greater had the queen resolved to make a total breach with Spain, and to follow up the results of this expedition at once.

Drake, however, was not long left idle. It was felt

that the expected blow from Spain was at last to fall, and the shipping of Plymouth was placed under his orders.

In 1587 he had command of a strong squadron of queen's ships and merchantmen, with a commission "to impeach the joining together of the King of Spain's fleet out of their several ports, to keep victuals from them, to follow them in case they should come forward towards England or Ireland, and to cut off as many of them as he could, and impeach their landing, as also to set upon such as should either come out of the West or East Indies into Spain, or go out of Spain thither."

Drake sailed on April 2, but had hardly left before the queen repented of her determination. And on April 6 orders were sent to Drake "to confine his operations to the capture of ships on the open sea, and to forbear entering any of the ports or havens of Spain, or to do any act of hostility by land." But these orders did not reach him, and promptly he proceeded to carry out those with which he had sailed.

Arriving off Cadiz on the 19th, he found a large number of Spanish ships collected. These ships were neither fully manned nor armed, and he dashed in among them and sank or burnt thirty-three of them. Four ships laden with provisions he took away. On May 1 he sailed again, having, as he said, "sing'd the King of Spain's beard for him."

Such daring astonished all Europe, and even the Spaniards were forced to admire it. The only note of discord came from Drake's own squadron. His second in command, Borough, was a good old sailor and pilot, but he was aghast at his commander's recklessness.

Borough complained that his advice had not been taken, and eventually placed his grievances upon paper. After stating that though Drake had often assembled

his captains, it was only to tell them what he intended to do and not to give them a chance to criticize his actions, Borough continues:

“I have found you always so wedded to your own opinion and will, that you rather disliked, and showed as it were offensive unto you, that any should give you advice in anything.”

At the time this was written Drake was contemplating an attack on Sagres, and Borough protested against this proceeding so vigorously that Drake replied by placing him under arrest. Evidently Borough felt very uncomfortable in this position, for he wrote afterwards:

“All this time I stood ever in doubt of my life, and did expect daily when the admiral would have executed upon me his bloodthirsty desire, as he did upon Doughty.”

The attack on Sagres was successful, but shortly after the “Lion”, Borough’s flagship, parted company and returned to England, the vice-admiral declaring that, having been displaced by Drake, he had no longer any authority.

Drake was very angry, and when he returned to England he wanted Borough to be tried for mutiny and desertion. Burghley, however, took a more favourable view of Borough’s conduct, and prevented the charge from being pushed, and when Borough served creditably enough in the following year the charge was allowed to drop.

On leaving Sagres Drake ranged along the coast, making many captures and creating a perfect panic. Then he anchored off the mouth of the Tagus, in Cascaes Bay, half hoping that the Marquis of Santa Cruz would come out and attack him. The ships of Santa Cruz, however, were not ready for service, and after Drake had assured himself that Santa Cruz would not come out, he decided to stretch away to the Azores, and try to intercept some

homeward-bound ships. His squadron was dispersed in a gale, but he, with his own ship, captured a large East Indiaman, which he took to England in June.

Drake was desirous to return to the coast of Spain as soon as he had refitted and recruited his crews, which were sadly reduced by sickness. But neither the queen nor Burghley approved of this project. They were anxious not to exasperate Philip, and they did not seem to understand that if his fleet was destroyed, and his arsenals were burnt, it did not matter whether he was exasperated or not. Spain's power appeared so terrible to them that they could not understand how weak it really was against such an attack as Drake's.

So months passed, and in December Lord Howard was appointed to the chief command of the whole navy of England. Drake was sent to command at Plymouth, where in May Howard and the greater part of the fleet joined him. There they were condemned to wait while the Spanish king leisurely fitted out the Armada, appointed the Duke of Medina Sidonia to command it, and sent it to sea when it was reported to be ready.

From the first Drake had maintained that the proper defence against the Armada was to prevent it from coming. If the Spanish ships were burnt in the Spanish ports there would be no Spanish Armada in the Channel. In the Tagus or the Groyne he wished to light up such a bonfire that aggression on the part of Spain would at once have been put to an end.

"If her Majesty and your lordships think that the King of Spain meaneth any invasion in England," Drake wrote, "then doubtless his force is and will be great in Spain, and therein he will make his groundwork or foundation whereby the Prince of Parma may have the better entrance, which in mine own judgment is most

to be feared. But if there may be such a stay or stop made, by any means, of this fleet in Spain, that they may not come through the seas as conquerors, then shall the Prince of Parma have such a check thereby as were meet."

So that this was Drake's idea is certain. We know that Howard at first disagreed with it, though afterwards he wrote, "I did and will yield ever unto them of greater experience" Howard also wrote: "The opinion of Sir Francis Drake, Mr. Hawkyns, Mr. Frobiser, and others that be men of greatest judgment and experience, as also my own, concurring with them in the same, is that the surest way to meet with the Spanish fleet is upon their own coast or in any harbour of their own, and there to defeat them."

Hawkyns, a bold seaman, had seen but little of war, and had not been afloat for nearly twenty years. Frobiser's experience was as a navigator rather than a warrior. They at once accepted Drake's opinion, and their united voice impressed this opinion upon Howard.

But even Howard could not impress it upon the queen; and so the Armada, instead of being destroyed at Lisbon or Corunna, where failure would have permitted a second attempt, had to be defeated less decisively, in the Channel, and off Gravelines, where failure would have been disastrous, and was beaten to pieces, also less decisively, on the western coast of Ireland.

It is unnecessary here to speak of the watch that was kept at Plymouth, or of how, when the Armada appeared, the fleet fought with it on July 21. The same afternoon Drake, by Howard's desire, wrote to warn Lord Henry Seymour and the squadron in the Downs of the enemy's approach."

"There hath passed," he said, "some cannon shot

between some of our fleet and some of them, and as far as we perceive they are determined to sell their lives with blows." And after adding that the lord admiral wished the ships under Seymour and Sir William Wynter to be ready to assist, Drake concludes, "The fleet of Spaniards is somewhat above a hundred sails, many great ships; but truly I think not half of them men of war."

During that night Drake was appointed to set the watch, to hang on to the Spaniards, and, by his poop lantern, to show his position to the ships astern. But about midnight, he saw some ships steering to the south-west, and thought they might be Spaniards doubling back to make an assault on Plymouth.

These ships he followed, but in order not to draw the whole fleet after him on what might be a false trail, he put out his lights and followed alone. The ships proved to be German merchantmen making their way down Channel, but as Drake returned to the fleet he met the flagship of the Andalusian squadron, which had been disabled and shamefully deserted by Medina Sidonia. Her commander wished to make terms, saying that he was Don Pedro de Valdes, and it behoved him not to surrender except on honourable conditions. The Englishman replied that he was Francis Drake, and that Don Pedro must either surrender at once or fight. So Don Pedro surrendered immediately, esteeming it an honour to fall into the hands of Drake, "whose valour and felicity were so great that Mars and Neptune seemed to attend him in his attempts."

Meanwhile, however, Drake's escapade had caused confusion and danger. In need of his guiding light, the fleet had scattered, and when morning dawned, Howard, who had mistaken a Spanish light for Drake's, was, with only three ships, close to the enemy, while the rest of the

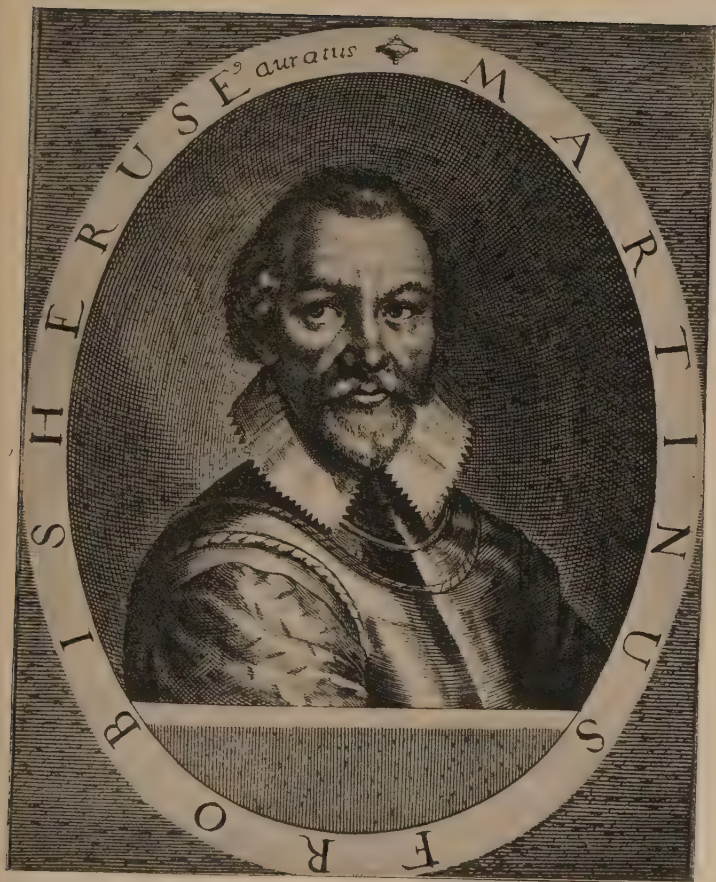
fleet was hull down or out of sight astern. A more capable admiral than Medina Sidonia would have assuredly captured the English lord admiral. But although this disaster did not occur, Drake's conduct was severely criticized, even by those who believed that his story was true.

But there were men in the fleet who did not believe Drake's story, and who declared that he had turned aside either to plunder the merchantmen, or to capture the Andalusian "Capitana." Additionally they said that to endanger the fleet in pursuit of his private advantage, was a base action. As to which there was afterwards a very angry quarrel between Drake and Frobiser, the latter speaking publicly of Drake as a "cowardly knave or traitor", and said: "After he had seen the 'Capitana' in the evening, that she had lost her masts, then, like a coward, he kept by her all night because he would have the spoil. He thinks to cozen us of our share of 15,000 ducats, but we will have our shares, or I will make him spend the best blood in his body."

The quarrel was smoothed over by Lord Sheffield and by Howard, but before this happened battles were fought and won.

The heavy Spanish ships had been followed up the Channel, and had lost heavily in ships, in men, and in spirit. It needed little to scare them from Calais roads, and the battle off Gravelines on July 29 was decisive. They fled to their doom in the seas of the wild north and the still wilder west.

England had been saved, and saved by the fleet. And of all the men who had fought so bravely, no one received a larger measure of popular applause than Drake. So much applauded, indeed, was Drake, that many people, even at the present day, think of him as, in fact, the



SIR MARTIN FROBISHER

From an engraving

commander-in-chief, an idea which could only be confirmed by much stronger evidence than exists.

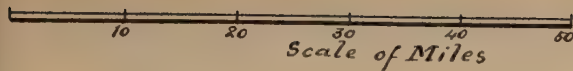
Drake, however, was appointed to command the naval part of the expedition, which it was resolved should repay Spain in her own coin. And it has been suggested that this was a snub to Howard. For this there is no authority, and no trace of jealousy between the two men is to be found. According to the standard of the day, Howard's rank put him beyond it.

Drake and Norreys had formulated the idea of this expedition, and Howard was not the man to stand in the way of their just claims. Possibly it would have been better if Howard had been less punctilious or more energetic. It is now a familiar maxim that one commander is better than two or three commanders. And had Howard been present to control the diverse opinions of Drake, Norreys, and Dom Antonio—the pretender to the Portuguese throne, in whose interests the expedition was nominally dispatched—the results might have been very different from what they were.

The objects in view were, first, “to distress the ships of war in Guipuzcoa, Biscay, and Galicia, so that they may neither hinder the attack on the King of Spain's dominions, nor be able to make a counter-attack on England during the absence of the fleet.” This might well have been omitted. The Spanish ships had been “distressed” enough in the previous year, and were very unlikely to offer any opposition.

Secondly, if possible, to seize Lisbon and establish the government of Dom Antonio.

Thirdly, to pass on to the Azores and seize one of the islands, “thereby to interrupt the convoys of treasure that do yearly pass that way to and from the East and West Indies.”



ATLANTIC OCEAN



These objects, desirable in themselves, might have been attained had there been one commander-in-chief, and an adequate force. With three generals, and an army that during two months' delay at Plymouth, had dwindled—by sickness and desertion—from 16,000 or 18,000 to about 9,000 men, the expedition was foredoomed to failure.

As it sailed from Plymouth on April 18, the expedition consisted of six of the queen's ships with more than a hundred merchant ships as transports, and about 12,000 men all told, mariners and soldiers.

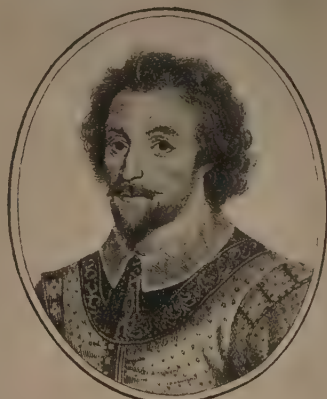
Corunna was attacked on the 24th, and all the shipping was burnt and the lower town taken and plundered. The upper town held out, and as the weather was favourable for sailing, the troops were re-embarked on May 10. Terrible sickness was rapidly thinning the ranks, but in spite of this, and in face of bad weather and heavy surf, the troops were landed on the 19th at Peniche, whence they marched to Lisbon.

To this measure Drake was strongly opposed. For his plan was to land the troops in Cascaes Bay, at the very entrance of the Tagus; reducing the forts and castle that guarded the passage, and so bringing the ships off Lisbon, while the troops, by an easy march, invested it on the land side.

To the combined attack he believed the city would at once fall. Its defences, in fact, all faced the land; towards the water it was open.

Norreys, however, accepted Dom Antonio's statement that all Portugal would rise in his favour, and the soldiers were eager to gain distinction on shore. So Drake was outvoted and had to yield.

While the soldiers, who were in no condition to march over heavy roads and in a burning climate, were struggling



Sir John Norris.

From an Original by Zuccherò, late in the Wand Collection

the 24 of Auguste 1685
 your Majesty's most
 Dutifull Subject
 J. Norris

This Autograph from an original Letter in the Possession of John

SIR JOHN NORRIS

From an engraving after a painting by Zuccherò

through the fifty miles to Lisbon, Drake went into Cascaes Bay with the fleet, and seized the castle and a large number of merchant vessels. He might still, he thought, if the wind came fair, force the passage up the river and join hands with Norreys.

Before, however, he could do anything further he heard that the attack on the city had failed, and that the troops were marching down to Cascaes. There they were re-embarked without having sustained serious loss from fighting, but with many dead and more disabled through sickness.

Then bad weather set in. They were seventeen days getting to Vigo, where they failed to obtain supplies. The men were dying fast; a muster of effective men showed only 2,000. Drake filled up the complement of the best ships and started for the Azores; Norreys and the rest turned towards England.

A violent storm almost immediately followed, the squadrons were scattered, and Drake made the best of his way to Plymouth, where he arrived at the end of June.

A fair amount of booty was brought home, and the destruction of shipping and stores put an end, for the time, to any chance of Spain renewing the attempt of invasion. But, on the other hand, the loss of life, in spite of all efforts to conceal the facts, was undoubtedly enormous.

For some years after this Drake was on shore, attending to the water supply and municipal affairs of Plymouth, which, in 1593, he represented in Parliament.

Towards the end of 1594 he was ordered by the queen to take command of an expedition to the West Indies, with his old friend, Sir John Hawkins, as vice-admiral. From the beginning it was a badly-managed affair. The expedition was not ready to sail until August, 1595, by

which time the Spaniards knew its strength and probable destination and were thoroughly prepared to meet it.

After a month the fleet reached the Grand Canary, and Las Palmas was found to be fortified and impossible to take by assault. Drake thereupon steered for Guadeloupe, which was reached at the end of October. Again preparations had been made to meet him, and although an attempt was made on Porto Rico, Hawkyns died on the day they arrived off it, and after several encounters, it was found to be too strong for the force.

Other places were visited, but those that could not be strongly held had been deserted. Drake himself was suffering from dysentery, but the old spirit of enterprise prompted him to land, and try to march across the isthmus to Panama. The Spaniards, however, were now ready. The roads were blocked by numerous forts, and worn out by sickness and disappointment, Drake returned to his ship.

He died, and was buried at sea off Porto Bello, on January 28, 1596.

In English history Drake holds the peculiar position of being the first to win distinction and fame purely as a seaman. To compare him with his late successors is impossible, because the circumstances of his career were so entirely different.

As a commander we recognize in him all the conditions of greatness. Energy, caution in preparing, promptness in acting, unswerving courage, fearlessness of responsibility. He was "a man of masterful temper, careful of the lives and interests of his subordinates, but permitting no assumption of equality; impatient of advice, intolerant of opposition, self-possessed, and self-sufficing."

His voyage round the world may be taken as an epitome of his career. The conception and the carrying it

through in the face of all difficulties and dangers mark the genius, the courage, the prudence, and the self-reliance which distinguished him in higher command.

But he was essentially the man of his time; the embodiment of the maritime genius of the Elizabethan age; the founder of the system on which his successors built, the tracer of lines which they developed.

He was the man who taught English sailors that the proper way to fight their enemies was not to wait to be attacked, but to search them out on their own coasts. And this is a lesson which has borne good fruit ever since, and is as true to-day as it was three hundred years ago.

III.

ROBERT BLAKE.

(1600-1657.)

BLAKE's remarkable career as a naval officer began at the age of fifty, and lasted for eight years.

His previous experiences were those of an Oxford scholar, a Bridgwater merchant, a puritan politician, and a colonel in the army of the commonwealth. Each of these in succession helped to make the man. It is not for us to criticize either his politics or religion, but it is right to inquire how he became what he was.

Sprung from stock long settled in the neighbourhood of Bridgwater, a prosperous, well-connected, and, locally, honoured stock, his father might have been expected to bring up his eldest son to his own business. Instead he was sent to Oxford at sixteen, and kept there from 1616-1625.

For six or seven of these years he was a member of the newly-founded Somersetshire college, Wadham, from which college he took his degree of Bachelor of Arts.

There he was in an easy position, and pursued classical studies in the hope that he would obtain a fellowship. Happily he failed, and his father's last illness called him away to take his place as head of the family.

At Oxford Blake, though not perhaps a student in the full sense of the word, made classical literature more or less a part of himself. One of the most probable of the legends which have gathered round his great name, is

that he was accustomed in after life to quote the Latin poets to illustrate passing events.

His mind necessarily was familiar with the fine examples of Greek and Roman public spirit, to say nothing of classical republicanism. At any rate his career showed in perfection the traces of the stubborn old Roman character.

Still more closely clung to him the ingrained puritanism which was probably a part of his home-training. The last years of James I had made their marks on the university records. Oxford was the battle-ground of the opposing ecclesiastical factions, headed respectively by Laud and Abbot.

Blake must have watched with dismay the king's treatment of parliaments, and the efforts of the court to gain a foothold in the university. To note a small instance, what must he have felt some years later, when the gift he had made to his college, the "Blake Salt", was passed over to the Royal Mint at Oxford, so that, with the rest of the college plate, it could be coined into money for King Charles?

Blake's father died in debt, but when Robert entered upon the second stage of his career, he paid this debt and also managed to educate and settle his numerous brothers. Perhaps we may find in these circumstances the reason why he never married.

In his business at Bridgwater he learnt the habits which were of such value to him when the reorganization of the navy fell largely to his share. He was also learning the habit of acting on his own responsibility in connexion with nautical affairs. There is no proof that he sailed on his own trading ventures, but it was the ordinary custom of the day.

Probably during this period he spent some years at

Schiedam, in Holland. When at home he was an interested witness of the forcible measures taken in ecclesiastical matters by the predominant authorities of his neighbourhood.

In 1640 Blake was elected to parliament for Bridgwater, as an opponent of the court. But the "Short Parliament" was almost immediately dissolved. And when the "Long Parliament" was summoned shortly afterwards, the influence of the royalist gentry placed a member of their own body in the seat which Blake had occupied.

His brief experience had brought him into contact with the leaders of the Great Rebellion. But there is no reason to think that his military talents were as yet detected by anyone. He was already a middle-aged man, and no gifts of eloquence had carried him to the front.

Nothing, apparently, but the Civil War could have brought to light the abilities of the man who was to be one of England's chief naval heroes.

When it was clear that the contest between king and parliament must be decided by war, Blake seems to have been active in raising troops to resist the royal forces. He served under Sir John Horner against the royalist Marquis of Hertford, and afterwards as lieutenant-colonel of Alexander Popham's fine west-country regiment.

In this position he showed his resolute spirit in the defence of Bristol, and when he was detached to Dorsetshire he at length became famous by his defence of Lyme Regis in 1644.

The place was a mere fishing village and weak by its situation, and the very feeble defences hastily thrown up were quite unfit to resist an army of 6,000 men, with a regular siege train, commanded by Prince Maurice.

Nevertheless Blake's infectious courage, his fertility of resource, his utter indifference to the odds brought against

him, and his excellent intelligence of the proceedings of the enemy, enabled him to resist perpetual bombardments, which ended with a storm of red-hot shot.

After a magnificent defence of some three months, Maurice's necessities and Lord Warwick's fleet put an end to the siege.

This in itself was a fine performance, but the defence of Taunton, in 1645, was not less desperate, and was far more talked about.

Into Taunton Blake threw himself at the critical moment when the Earl of Essex had blundered almost fatally in the western campaign, and here he restored the fortunes of the parliamentary party. Like Lyme, Taunton was unfortified and unarmed, but its situation gave it an importance which justified all risks, and its inhabitants shrank from no sacrifice which Blake asked them to make. Every effort was made to dislodge him.

Desperate street-fighting continually resulted in the defeat of the storming parties. Starvation was at one time imminent. Fresh commanders, fresh bodies of besiegers, fared no better than their predecessors. In fact, there were no fewer than three sieges before relief finally arrived.

The town was, by that time, in a ruined state. Lord Clarendon himself admits that the defence of Taunton had occupied a body of 4,000 foot and 5,000 horse for nearly all the summer of 1645. But its defence had broken up the royalist superiority in the west of England. And, next to the decisive battles of Marston Moor and Naseby, probably contributed more than anything else to the king's discomfiture.

Between 1645 and 1649 there is little to tell of Blake. He was again member for Bridgwater in 1645, but, as Governor of Taunton, he devoted himself for some months

to the restoration of the battered town. His forces were disbanded, and the self-denying ordinance relieved him from his command.

Much speculation has been caused by this temporary obscurity. Some think that he had incurred the jealousy of Cromwell, others say that he objected to the cruelty with which the king was treated.

But, although his name is not to be found on the list of the regicides, he certainly did not take any steps to save the life of the king. And, within a few days of the king's execution he accepted his great post of "general-at-sea."

His temporary obscurity is probably to be accounted for by the fact that he was not one of Cromwell's comrades during the war, and was therefore not likely to be preferred to those who had fought by the conqueror's side. Moreover Blake was not the man to push himself to the front.

No doubt he presented himself rather as a man of action than a statesman. In the straightforward, republican patriot, Cromwell's keen eye discovered the man who was required to reorganize the navy. Blake was the man who was able to "prevent foreigners from fooling us."

That famous expression, whether originally Blake's or not, exactly represented his conduct of sea affairs. And under the commonwealth, with a fleet which had not yet forgotten the Stuarts, this principle alone could save the State.

On February 12, 1649, foreign affairs being threatening, Colonel Edward Popham, Colonel Blake, and Colonel Deane were appointed "generals-at-sea." Blake's brief career as an English naval officer divides itself into his operations against Prince Rupert and in the British Channel, the Dutch war, and the Spanish war.

The title of "general" had been very commonly given to the chief admiral of a fleet, but the new title seems to have been deliberately chosen so that the sea-officers and men might think that they were about to be governed by the most distinguished of the land-officers, who had brought the Civil War to an end. Some members of the Council of State, with Vane at their head, formed the navy committee.

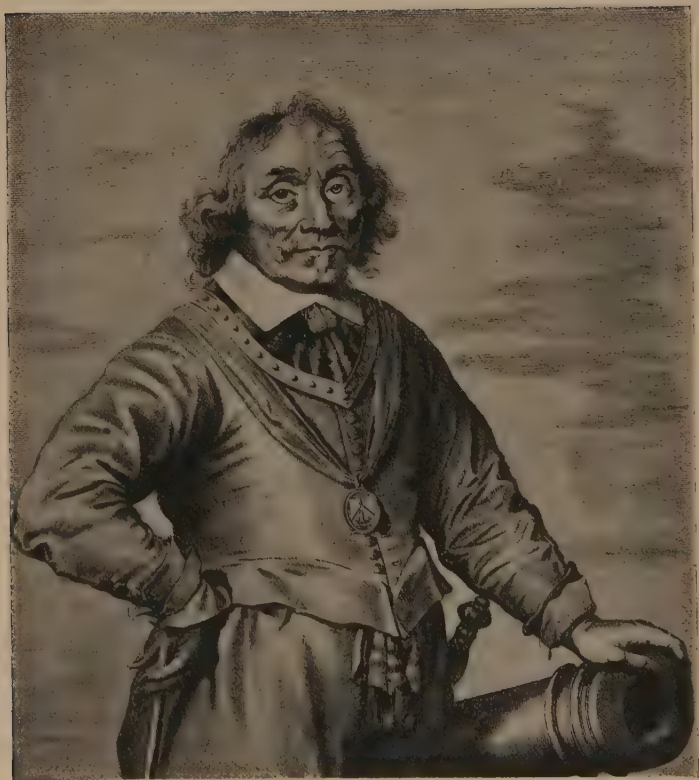
Blake's duty was to deal with Prince Rupert, whose squadron seized what they required from the "rebels," very much after the fashion of pirates. For some months he blockaded Rupert's ships at Kinsale, but he was eventually driven off by a November gale and Rupert escaped to Portugal.

Cromwell now offered him the post of major-general under himself, for the conquest of Ireland. But Blake preferred to continue his hunting of Prince Rupert. From March to May, 1650, he watched the mouth of the Tagus; and we now have the advantage of following his proceedings in the State Papers.

Everything was left to his judgment, and every attention paid to his suggestions for the "honour and interest of the commonwealth." His letters show that he was not in the least afraid of the responsibility thrown upon him, but, at the same time, he was careful to justify every one of his proceedings.

Acting under general orders, Blake resolved to take strong measures both with Portugal and France. But until the Lisbon trade was stopped King John refused to expel Prince Rupert from the Lisbon waters. Then, however, Rupert had to go, and he once more escaped from Blake's blockade, and sought refuge in the south-eastern ports of Spain.

Thither Blake followed him, and drove some of his ships



ADMIRAL CORNELIS VAN TROMP

From an engraving by Van Dalen after a painting by Livias

on shore, but not those of Prince Rupert and Prince Maurice, who proceeded to take refuge in Toulon. Again Blake's remonstrances were unheeded and again he stopped the trade, with the result that the princes, finding themselves unwelcome, made off to the West Indies.

There Maurice was lost at sea, and Rupert was reduced to the one ship which he commanded, and which finally carried him to France. After that Rupert was compelled to keep quiet and to wait for better times.

These services lasted two years, and were gratefully recognized by parliament. Blake was then given the task of subduing the last refugees of the royalists in the English Channel. His instructions were written in the style common to his masters and to himself. "You are to make use of that reputation which the good success from the hand of God has given you, to complete what remains."

His success in this service was certainly not inferior to the last, while the national danger was greater. The Scilly Isles were holding out vigorously against the parliament, and their excellent situation for harassing the English trade had attracted the notice of the Dutch.

Admiral Tromp had been sent with a squadron to reconnoitre. But war between the English and Dutch had not yet been decided upon, and Blake had no difficulty in reducing and securing the islands.

The invasion of England by the young Charles in 1651, caused Blake to be appointed commander-in-chief of the army in the four counties of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, and Dorset. But three days afterwards the order was cancelled, and Blake was told to go to the Downs and to hoist his flag on board the "Victory."

There his duties were to see that no supplies were sent to the "King of Scotland, who is now marching to the

south", to keep the fleet in order, and "to prevent any impressions that may be made on the seamen by misrepresentation of affairs."

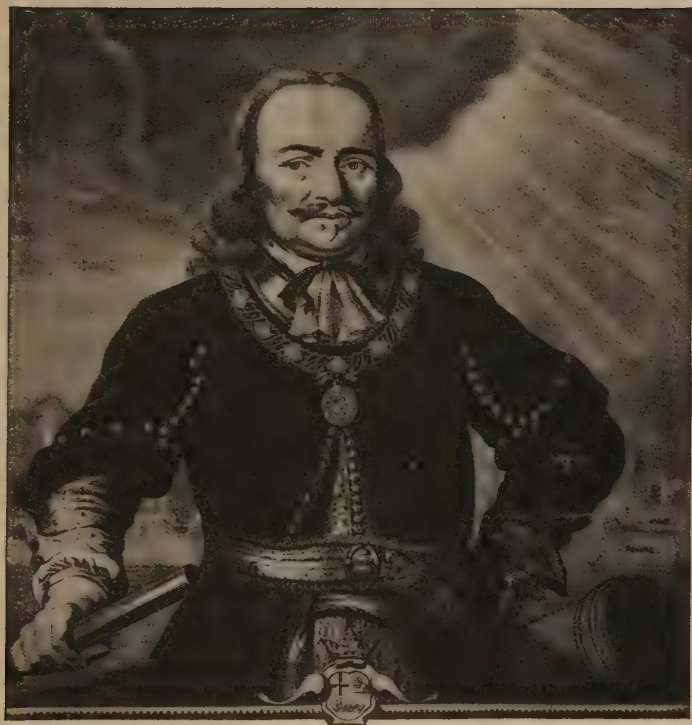
This position of his marks him out as the indispensable officer to be employed on emergencies by land and sea, and proves that in the estimation of parliament he stood close to Cromwell. This was emphasized soon afterwards by his appointment, jointly with Lambert, to the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports. And still more by his being made sole general-at-sea for the next nine months.

The capture of Jersey was his last task before the great Dutch war. Sir George Carteret held it for the king, and made a gallant defence, but as at Scilly, Blake brought his ships close up against the forts in a manner almost unknown until then, and suffered but little in the process.

In these minor engagements he learnt to estimate the military importance of forts and their guns, as then provided and armed, at their true value in relation to ships, and he was soon about to illustrate his experience.

Towards the end of the year 1651 parliament elected their general-at-sea to a place in the Council of State. On that board he was necessarily conversant with every detail of naval administration, and in a position of equality with the men who had been working for the good of the service. Confidential relations between Blake and the Council, and especially with Cromwell who was at the head of it, were not established a day too soon, for the most critical war in which England had ever been engaged was on the point of breaking out.

As a councillor, Blake had the advantage seldom possessed by a sea-officer, of becoming acquainted with the true aspect of foreign affairs, as far as they presented themselves to the government through its various channels of information. On the Council he contributed largely



ADMIRAL MICHAEL DE RUYTER

From an engraving by Bol after a painting by Barg

to the schemes for the further improvement in the treatment of seamen.

The Navigation Act of 1651, which stopped the great Dutch carrying-trade, was the actual cause of the war. But at that date there was no chance of peaceful rivalry in commerce and colonization. Innumerable hostile encroachments and studied insults could only end one way, and the Dutch were already engaged in fitting out a fleet of men-of-war.

On two main points the English resolved to insist, and the Dutch to offer a stubborn resistance. These were: (1) The ancient claim of the English to the sovereignty of the Narrow Seas, always submitted to by other nations, even in the ignominious reigns of James and Charles. (2) The right to the fishing grounds on British coasts.

The "honour of the flag" came first into dispute. Cromwell, though he himself disapproved of the war, was sent by the Council on March 16 to confer with Blake in the Downs; and the course to be pursued was arranged between them.

Blank commissions for a vice- and rear-admiral were placed in Blake's hands, but before he could fill them up war had begun. His fleet was by no means numerous enough for the work which lay before it, but it was rapidly increased as the struggle developed.

Blake, indeed, had only fifteen ships in his own division, with which he was cruising in the Straits of Dover, while Major Bourne was anchored in the Downs with eight more.

Then Tromp suddenly appeared off Dover Castle at the head of forty-two ships, and not only, as the English believed, deliberately insulted it, but did not lower his flag. Soon after this, Blake, who had been at anchor off Rye, hove in sight, when Tromp stood out to sea.

Presently, however, Tromp bore right up for Blake's squadron, a proceeding which the general considered to show a "resolution to engage." So Blake now "singled himself from the rest of the fleet," and approached the Dutch admiral with a view to demand the salute of the English flag without bloodshed. For that purpose he fired three single guns in succession, to which Tromp, far from lowering his flag, replied with a broadside. The Dutch opened the war.

The battle then began with fury. But Blake was so far ahead of his own ships, that for some time he had to fight alone against all the Dutch ships that could get near him. As his squadron came up he was gradually relieved, but the "James" was severely handled and lost many men.

Bourne, however, made all possible haste to attack the Dutch rear, and Tromp thought it best to make off in the darkness, and he did not resume the fight on the following day. He professed to consider the battle a surprise, and desired fresh orders.

In this first and quite unequal combat, two Dutch ships were taken. Such was the issue, as Blake says, of the Dutch "watching an advantage to brave us upon our own coasts."

The Council and parliament cordially approved of Blake's proceedings, promised to attend to all his wants, and authorized him to engage and destroy Tromp's fleet.

On June 8, 1652, the general reported to the Council the "willingness and unanimity" of the officers of the fleet. To which the Council replied with an effusiveness which was none the less sincere for being expressed in the usual puritanical phrases.

Convinced of the justice of their cause, these grim warriors appealed to Heaven. In view of the approaching

struggle, "Blake, with his officers and seamen, kept several days of humiliation in the fleet."

Already Blake had shown his desire to test the sincerity of his men at the cannon's mouth. He was renowned for the discipline which he had introduced into the navy, but, like Cromwell's management of his invincible "Iron-sides", it was a sympathetic discipline.

The government now resolved to employ the fleet in the capture of Dutch merchant ships, and in enforcing the established tax of the tenth fish on Scottish fishing-grounds. This fishing tax had been commuted for an annual payment of £30,000, which the Dutch latterly had refused to pay.

Several rich prizes were sent into English ports, and Blake himself sailed north in the "Resolution", of sixty-eight guns, with the main part of his fleet, in order to deal with the 600 herring-busses and their convoy, and to waylay the Dutch India ships coming round the coast of Scotland. Sir George Ayscue, his rear-admiral, was left to guard the Straits of Dover.

Eleven out of the twelve ships which formed the convoy were captured or sunk by Blake's advanced squadron.

But the remarkable thing was that Blake allowed the whole of those busses which he caught, after being unloaded of their fish, to go free with their crews.

He had good reasons for this, but at the time his conduct was remarked upon as a case of misplaced generosity. Even so it was characteristic, and the Blake legends supply many instances of a similar kind. He had no quarrel with the poor.

In spite of the political divisions which hampered his movements, Tromp had collected a fine fleet in the Texel long before it was expected, but the winds and waves favoured the English. He failed both in overpowering

Ayscue's small squadron, and in meeting Blake off the Orkneys.

But he did succeed in alarming the English coast so much that Cromwell himself went down to erect batteries near Deal, and extensive preparations were made to resist a landing.

Westerly winds and calms, however, stopped that part of Tromp's plan, and taking up the merchant fleet which was waiting for outward convoy, he sailed speedily to the north to protect the Dutch homeward-bound trade, and to match himself against Blake in those seas.

Tromp's force seems to have been superior, but it was the fault of neither Tromp nor Blake that there was not an engagement. For, just as the fight was going to begin, a tremendous storm broke upon and scattered both fleets.

Tromp's fleet suffered by far the most, and he lost some ships; while Blake sheltered behind the mainland of Shetland. Both fleets then returned home.

The Dutch were furiously angry with Tromp, and said that his misfortunes were due to his loss of time in the Channel, when he ought to have gone straight to the defence of the fishing-fleet. The insults heaped on the great chief culminated in suspension from his command.

De Ruyter, a younger officer whose reputation, already high, was to eclipse that of Tromp, hoisted his flag; but De Witt took the chief command. This turned out to be a great mistake, for political quarrels ran so high that the crew of Tromp's late flagship, the "Brederode", actually refused to allow the new commander-in-chief, the unpopular rival of their favourite admiral, to come on board.

Before, however, Ayscue, who had been sent westward, could join Blake, De Ruyter, with great quickness,

managed to cut him off, and a drawn battle followed. Ayscue then went into Plymouth to refit, and some of his ships, having joined Blake, took part in the battle which followed.

Before this battle was fought Blake fell in with a French squadron on its way to relieve Dunkirk, which was being besieged and hard pressed by the Spaniards. England was not regularly at war with either nation, but the French were under the grave displeasure of the commonwealth for certain commercial offences, and still more for the active sympathy they had shown towards the banished royalists.

Treating the matter as a question of reprisals, Blake was ordered by the English government to attack this squadron, which he did successfully. Consequently Dunkirk had to surrender for want of supplies, but France was not in a condition to declare war. And yet it was Spain, and not France, that Cromwell finally resolved to attack. Both courted him and trembled. The great battles were now to come. But the English this time were much better prepared than their enemy. The Dutch fleet had been sent out in haste, the ships were not properly manned, and discipline was weakened by political divisions.

The Dutch populace, enraged at the loss of their fish, would not, however, hear of delay.

The Dutch commanders did their best to make up for their disadvantages by drawing up their ships on the flank of the great shoal known as the Kentish Knock, nor far from the North Foreland, but this position was of no use to them.

On September 28, 1652, Blake attacked, and gave positive orders that his ships were to reserve their fire until they came to close quarters. Thus they did great execution on the enemy without much loss to themselves.

"Three of the Dutch ships," says Blake, "were wholly disabled at the first brunt, having lost all their masts." The "Royal Sovereign", no longer called "Royal", was said to have sunk one of her opponents with a single broadside.

Penn and Bourne the vice- and rear-admirals, performed their duty with the greatest courage and skill. The victory was complete. "The Dutch rear-admiral and two captains were prisoners."

In the morning the enemy made off to Holland, with the loss of four, probably more, ships. "On the second day they were many less in number than the first." It was reported that they sent no less than 2,000 wounded men on shore, but accurate statistics were not to be found on either side.

De Witt had good excuses for his defeat. But besides the disadvantages from which his ships were suffering, he also accused several of his captains of the worst possible conduct. Some of these men were tried and found guilty.

The real blame, however, lay at the door of the bitter political divisions among the people, and of the practical independence of the different States. Each State had its own admiralty, and disgraceful conduct was the natural consequence.

This disaster only brought out the high spirit of the Dutch, and made them determined to rectify their errors as far as they could. The first step was to humble themselves to Tromp, and to persuade him once more to be head of the navy. His views were consulted as to the appointment of officers, and in less than six weeks he was at sea with willing crews in eighty-five ships.

The English Intelligence Department, as we should now call it, did not exist. As regards information the Dutch

were much better off than the English. Our Council of State thought that the victory already won had decided the war.

So, ships being wanted in other places, the victorious fleet was broken up into squadrons. Blake was left with only forty-five ships, and some of these only partially manned, to guard the Channel. But he cannot be held accountable for this state of things. Indeed his warnings of what might happen had been disregarded, and the instructions as to the apportionment of his fleet had been imperative and precise.

The emergency arose suddenly, and he had at once to meet it. Tromp had arrived, after seeing his outward-bound convoy safe on their way, and was, with about double the number of ships, ready and anxious for battle; while Blake was at anchor in the Downs, and exposed to Tromp's attack.

The council of war, which Blake (like the other parliamentary admirals) always summoned on such occasions, agreed with him that they ought to accept Tromp's challenge, rather than let him loose upon the coasts and shipping of England.

This decision must be judged, not only by the strict rules of strategy, but by the larger considerations which affected the condition of affairs. It must be remembered that, although the Dutch fleet was larger in numbers than the English, Blake had a few ships superior to any of the enemy's, and that he had no reason to respect greatly the fighting qualities of the Dutch.

The result proved that Blake had underrated his foe, but this superiority in numbers would probably not have told as it did, if the very captains who had voted for battle had not misbehaved. This, then, cannot be considered a foolhardy enterprise.

Blake, indeed, had a fair prospect of success, and at the opening of the war it was all-important to show an undaunted front, and, even though taken by surprise, to make the best of it. The government, at any rate, showed after the battle that this was their opinion. Certainly Blake was not blamed by them.

On November 29 the little English fleet sailed out to engage their powerful enemy, but the battle took place off Dungeness on the following day. It centred as usual round the chief admirals on either side.

Blake, in the "Triumph", of sixty-eight guns, had a desperate encounter with the flagships of De Ruyter and Evertsen, but the "Triumph" was nobly supported by the "Vanguard" and "Victory." These three ships were, in fact, engaged for a long time with twenty ships of the enemy at once, but although badly mauled they were not taken.

Tromp, on the other hand, succeeded in capturing the "Garland" and the "Bonaventure". Three other English ships were sunk, and the "Hercules" was picked up by a Dutch squadron on the following night. The Dutch lost one ship, and in other ways suffered very severely.

Blake, however, uncertain of his own officers, decided to retreat to Dover, and thence to the Thames, "where they might have the river to friend if need should require."

This was the celebrated occasion when Tromp, following a Dutch example after a victory in the Baltic, is said to have hoisted a broom at his masthead; but against this legend there is a great deal to be said. Whether the story is true or not, Tromp was so satisfied with his success that he stood over to the French shore and passed his convoy through the Channel.

The splendid valour shown by Blake and some of his

officers absolved him, when the circumstances were known, from blame. But at first there was alarm lest the Dutch should land and insult the coasts.

This anxiety soon passed away, but the commander's agony of mind at the retreat of his fleet remained. The failure to beat a brave enemy when the odds were all in favour of that enemy, affected Blake's spirits to such an extent that he wrote a most pathetic letter to the Council of State.

He insisted on an examination into the "deportment of several commanders" in the late action, since "there was so much baseness of spirit, not amongst the merchant-men only [for on both sides the best merchant ships were armed and ranked with the men-of-war] but many of the State ships." Next he desired an inquiry into the "discouragement and want of seamen," and then he asked for his "discharge from this employment, so much too great for me . . . that so I may spend the remainder of my days in private retirement and in prayers to the Lord for a blessing upon you and the nation"; and, again, "that so I may be freed from that trouble of spirit which lies upon me, arising from the sense of my own insufficiency and the usual effects thereof." There is, however, a saving clause in this despondent letter, between the lines of which we cannot but read his distress at being left with so weak a force; he earnestly begs for reinforcements "to fight them again." The letter, in short, had not been called forth by what could under the circumstances be considered a defeat, but partly by the serious mistake which had been made at head-quarters.

Nothing could be finer than the behaviour of the Council of State to their self-accusing general. Conscious that the fault had been their own, they granted all his

requests, except that he might be relieved from his command. They soothed his wounded feelings by thanking him warmly for his "good deportment in that action, and his faithful service." The new commissioners of the admiralty ordered the accused captains to be examined. All the detached squadrons were commanded to rally round the general. Infinite pains were taken to redress the wrongs of the seamen. Twelve hundred land soldiers were sent for ship-service. It was recognized that Blake had too great a burden to bear on his own shoulders.

Two officers of the highest distinction, Monck and Deane, were sent from Scotland to share the command with Blake, though, of course, Blake stood first of these three generals-at-sea. The two new generals had no time to learn much about naval affairs, for battles came on fast and furiously.

Tromp, in charge of the outward-bound trade, had swept the Channel; but the English were determined to prevent him from convoying the homeward-bound ships back to Holland.

Rivalling the spirit of the Dutch, extraordinary efforts were made to fit out a fleet strong enough to put an end to the war at once. In number of ships, however, the Dutch again had the advantage, but the greater size of some of the English ships redressed the balance.

Blake and Deane were both on board the "Triumph", with the brave Lawson under them in the "Speaker." Penn and Monck were each in command of separate squadrons. The naval system still was to fight in squadrons or divisions, under the red, white, and blue flags, the admiral of each in the centre, and the rest grouped round him ready to engage ship to ship.

In the Admiralty Instructions of 1647 the admiral of the fleet was to leave it to the vice-admiral "to assail



GEORGE MONCK, DUKE OF ALBEMARLE

From a painting by Lely in the National Portrait Gallery

the enemy's admiral, and to match yourself as equally as you can to succour the rest of the fleet as cause shall require, not wasting your powder, nor shooting afar off, nor till you come side by side."

Many lessons were learnt from the Dutch war. In the instructions of 1655, issued by Blake, Monck, Disbrowe, and Penn, as "admirals and generals of the fleet", "all the ships of every squadron shall endeavour to keep in a line with the chief."

The battle of Portland (February 18, 1653) was not only fought in squadrons, but the English squadrons happened to be separated when Tromp's fleet came in sight. Monck's squadron was four miles to leeward, and Tromp was much too good an officer to lose the chance to take his enemy in detail.

Bearing down with a westerly wind upon Blake, who was to windward of the rest, the red squadron was compelled to stand the brunt of the attack until the other squadrons could work up to its assistance.

It is difficult to decide how far Blake was to blame in not obtaining better warning of the enemy's movements. A dense fog had prevailed on the 16th, so that it could not have been easy to keep an efficient look-out. All things considered, it may be fairer to express surprise that Penn was only a mile, and Monck only four miles, to leeward at the critical moment, than to find fault with Blake.

Again the "Triumph" was the centre round which the battle raged, and again she fought several ships at once, the "Brederode", bearing Tromp's flag once more, being her chief opponent. Lawson hastened to the "Triumph's" assistance, and he was soon followed by Penn at the head of the blue squadron, which "stood through the whole Dutch fleet to support the generals."

Later Monck and his white squadron came up with the rest, and the tide of victory set in for the English. Tromp, alarmed for his convoy, which was attacked by English frigates, was glad to draw off for the night.

The "Triumph" still kept her flag flying, but she had been very seriously damaged, and a hundred of her men were killed. Blake himself was so severely wounded in the thigh that he never properly recovered, and his flag-captain and secretary were killed by his side.

Tromp and De Ruyter also suffered heavily, but they showed admirable skill in keeping their fleet together, and, when night came on, in getting to the support of their convoy. On the following day the English, with the wind in their favour, pursued up Channel, the enemy being formed into a crescent to protect their merchant ships, and the English with great effect breaking through from time to time. In the process the "Sampson" was lost, but, on the other hand, the dispatch of the three generals reports that at the close of the second day they had taken seventeen or eighteen men-of-war. This, however, was an over-estimate. On the third day the pursuit was again followed up, and it is said that altogether sixty Dutch men-of-war and merchant ships were taken or destroyed. But the skilful Dutch admirals managed to save the large majority of their fleet and convoy, by tiding home in their shallow waters. In this their flatter bottoms helped them, though that build had defects which gave the English an advantage at sea.

On the whole it was a great, but not a final victory. Tromp was hampered by his convoy, and even more by want of powder for his guns. Blake suffered from the separation of his squadrons at the beginning of the fight. Tromp had to complain of some of his captains. Blake,

on this occasion, was nobly supported. Blake also was greatly helped by the usefulness of the trained soldiers who had been distributed through the fleet.

The terrible nature of the battle is vividly told. Ships taken and re-taken; guns, muskets and cutlasses all in use at the same time at close quarters. The two great officers of the opposing fleets pitted against one another. And both countries, excited to the last degree of patriotic fervour, almost in sight of the combatants.

But two more—and still more decisive—victories were required before the spirit of the Dutch was broken. Blake, as the Dutch knew, was badly wounded; Monck was unknown at sea. They thought that their brilliant admirals, Tromp and De Ruyter, might win back all that was lost, and with greater courage than ever they hurried forth a new fleet which should give an opportunity to their officers.

During the crisis of the fight Blake's wound had been neglected, and it needed careful treatment after he had come on shore. But by May 12 he was attending to admiralty business. This was three weeks after Cromwell had put a violent end to the parliament, which led in a few months to his assumption of the title and office of Lord Protector.

Monck and Deane acquiesced in the new order of affairs; but Blake was not with the fleet, and his name does not appear. Blake, indeed, is reported to have disapproved of Cromwell's proceedings, but clearly he did not intend to give up the work which had fallen to his charge.

He was the senior general-at-sea. The Dutch were furious at their defeats, and sure to fight to the last. His fleet was in excellent order. Finally, he could depend on Monck, Deane, Penn, and Lawson to manage the instrument which he had prepared for their hands.

As it happened the next victory was due more to these generals than to Blake himself. As usual, the Dutch crossed over unexpectedly to the English shore, and Blake's own squadron, which had charge of the North Sea, did not join Monck until that officer, who was cruising near the Straits of Dover at the head of the other squadrons, had fought the battle of June 2.

This battle began near the North Foreland and ended off Nieuwpoort. Even without Blake the English had the advantage both in the number and size of ships. The chief event of the first day's battle was the death of Deane, who was cut in two by a chain-shot as he stood by Monck's side. Monck had the presence of mind, which never forsook him, to conceal the disaster by throwing his cloak over the body of his comrade.

The evidence concerning this battle is conflicting. A private letter of the time states that Monck fought at half-cannon shot, and ordered his captains not to "board on equal terms," as he should send in frigates for that purpose. This he did whenever he "found some of them disordered and foul one against the other."

Whether this is true or not, we know that the Dutch, being again short of powder, fell towards the afternoon into confusion, and drew off for the night. But Blake and his squadron of eighteen ships, having heard the firing, arrived on that night. On the next day the battle was renewed with spirit, and again with disastrous results to the Dutch. Blake's arrival turned the stubborn fight into a retreat, and only a remnant of Tromp's fleet found their way into port. Tromp himself had a remarkable escape. His men had boarded Penn's ship, but were repulsed by the crew, who, in their turn, boarded the "Brederode" with such success that Tromp, determined not to be taken alive, blew up the upper deck and



THE BATTLE OF SCHEVENINGEN
From a Dutch engraving

Penn's men along with it. His ship, however, was saved and he himself, as if by a miracle, survived untouched.

It appears that the English lost 362 men, killed and wounded, but they had taken eleven of the enemy's ships and sunk six others; two had been blown up, and 1350 prisoners were taken. The victory was so complete that the Dutch ports were effectually blockaded, and overtures of peace were sent to England, but were not accepted.

For some weeks after this victory Blake remained in command of the fleet on the Dutch Coast. His dispatches show that he had some serious causes of complaint. For instance he states that the 700 soldiers who had been sent over to him "might have been serviceable unto us had care been taken to have sent bedding and clothes along with them."

Again, the supply of provisions, powder and shot were by no means enough for his necessities. He was also troubled by the sickness of his men, and felt the more for them as he was exceedingly ill himself.

At last he had to yield to a complication of diseases, which were more or less the consequence of his wound, and were aggravated by want of rest. More dead than alive, he was landed at Solebay and, Monck having been appointed his successor, he retired to his own county. Thus he was absent from the final battle of July 29.

This enforced rest in 1653 was the first that had fallen to Blake's lot since he took up arms, and it was also the last.

On his estate at Knoll, near Bridgwater, his health gradually improved. We hear of his quiet, simple, religious habits; and though he did not dislike company his disposition was taciturn and contemplative. By the end of the year he was much better, and he entered

upon the last, and perhaps the most remarkable, part of his career.

It is hard to believe that within a few weeks after their great defeat, Tromp, De Ruyter, and De Witt should be ready with a fleet of some ninety ships to challenge the English once more. The strict blockade of their coasts was more than they could bear, and after manœuvring skilfully so as to unite their squadrons from different ports, they were met by the whole English fleet under Monck, Penn and Lawson.

The victory of the English was even more complete than before, and of a more sanguinary character. This may have been, partly at least, due to Monck's order that his fleet should neither give nor take quarter. But this order may have only been intended to prevent his ships from stopping to take possession of prizes.

Certainly it was not taken in the usual sense by many of Monck's officers and men, who saved several hundreds of their enemies from sinking ships.

The noble old admiral, Tromp, was killed early in the battle by a musket shot, but the battle was gallantly fought until all hope had vanished. The Dutch lost twenty-six ships and some 5,000 men killed in battle, drowned and wounded, besides 1,000 prisoners. The English losses were two ships and about 500 men.

The "Triumph", Blake's old ship, was set on fire by the enemy, and so hopeless did it seem to save her that the crew had begun to desert the ship. Vice-admiral Peacock, however, refused to give her up, and succeeded in bringing her out of the battle, although he was himself burnt to death in the effort. For this gallant action each of the survivors received a medal, specially struck for them.

The victory was decisive, and it ended the war, though



JAN DE WITT
From an engraving by Scriven

eight months passed before Cromwell would treat for peace. This for various reasons he granted at last on comparatively easy terms. A good deal had happened since the battle of the Texel.

On August 6, parliament, at the instance of Cromwell and the Council of State, ordered that Blake, Monck, Penn, and Lawson should each receive a large gold medal, and a valuable gold chain. Two of these medals, one at Windsor Castle and the other at Wadham College, are still to be seen. They are beautiful works of art by the famous Simon. To each, also, was assigned a gold chain; to Blake and Monck chains of £300 value; to Penn and Lawson chains of £100 value. Medals (to the value of £1,040 in all) were also voted for the inferior officers and men. The difference of money value at that date requires to be remembered in estimating the importance of these decorations.

Penn now became a general-at-sea, and Lawson vice-admiral. Active measures were taken to refit and increase the fleet, for owing to the splendid resistance of the Dutch, the English victories had been dearly bought. As autumn advanced, Blake superintended these operations himself, both at the admiralty committee in London and at Portsmouth, where Penn was extremely useful. Until the treaty was signed, care was taken by both Blake and Penn that the Dutch traders should find their way home by the northern route, and not through the English Channel.

France was also most carefully watched, and Cromwell was slowly making up his mind which of the two—France or Spain—he should attack. Blake is said to have preferred war with Spain, doubtless on religious grounds; and in this he represented the English feeling of Elizabethan times, which was by no means extinct.

Cromwell, as a puritan, agreed with Blake, and Cardinal Mazarin knew how to influence him in favour of France. But a very practical consideration probably was accountable for Cromwell's decision.

The English treasury was greatly in need of supply. Spain was rich; her galleons might be waylaid as in the days of Elizabeth, and her ocean trade might be sapped for the benefit of the English. France presented no such temptation. These were the principal ideas of Cromwell's policy, as it developed in the expeditions of Blake to the Mediterranean, and of Penn and Venables to the West Indies.

Blake set forth on September 29, 1654, his orders being as judiciously wide as before. Speaking generally, he was to represent his country as the chief maritime power of the day—a position which had been assumed for some years by the Dutch—to teach the Italian government to respect English merchants, and to force the Barbary States into some sort of civilized relation with the Christian world.

Of this first national assertion of English power in the Mediterranean, it is enough to say that it answered its purpose.

To take the pirate states in order, Blake began with Algiers, where he was civilly treated, though his demands for the release of English captives, and for compensation for piracy were most unsatisfactorily met. Tunis, however, defied him to do his worst, and so strongly was the place defended that even Blake decided to wait until he could come upon it by surprise. For this purpose he sailed off to Trapani.

His dispatch shows that Tunis was successfully surprised on April 4, 1655. "For", Blake writes, "after some hours' dispute we set on fire all their ships, which



A SEA FIGHT IN A HARBOUR

One of a series at Hampton Court, painted by *Vanderelde* for Charles II and James II to illustrate the Dutch wars

were nine in number, and the same favourable gale still continuing, we retreated out again into the roads. We had twenty-five slain and about forty hurt, with very little other loss. We are even now setting sail to go to Algiers, that being the only place that can afford us a considerable supply of bread and flesh, if they will." The ships of Tunis were fired by boats, which were rowed alongside the enemy's ships during the confusion of the battle, and threw inflammable materials into their ports. The "favourable gale" which took the English ships in and out of the harbour seems to have been what sailors call a "soldier's wind"—there and back again.

The Dey of Tunis was thoroughly cowed, and when Blake returned from Tripoli, where he had obtained instant satisfaction, he received the complete submission of the Dey. Blake's dispatches from the Mediterranean were addressed to Thurloe, Cromwell's secretary, and they show conspicuous loyalty to the protector. To use his own phrase, the "preservation of the commonwealth" took precedence with him of all political considerations, just as it had done at the opening of the Civil War.

Admiration of his great exploits was fully shared by the royalists, but it does not appear that he ever encouraged their sanguine belief that he would eventually take up their cause. When the country resolved to restore the Stuarts, would Blake have gone, with Monck, Penn, Lawson, and Montagu, or have retired to Switzerland like Ludlow? He was delivered by the hand of death from the pain of deciding.

This famous battle of Tunis is a typical example of Blake's courage in undertaking responsibility. He had no orders to attack the Barbary strongholds, and he was very anxious to know whether Cromwell approved

of his action. It was, however, an unnecessary anxiety, for Cromwell approved warmly.

Cromwell, indeed, did not object to the assumption of responsibility by his officers, but if they assumed responsibility he expected them to be successful. Very shortly afterwards he sent Penn and Venables to the Tower for their feeble conduct in the West Indies.

Having nearly completed his work in the Mediterranean, and being still uncertain of Cromwell's exact intentions with regard to Spain, Blake now took up his station off Cadiz to wait for definite orders. In every way this cruising off Cadiz was trying to him. Writing to Cromwell on August 30, he says, "There is no place or friendship in the Mediterranean." In fact, he keenly felt his isolation, and he had many reasons for complaint.

His provisions had run short; his fleet was full of sick men; his ships required re-fitting; he himself was suffering from many infirmities. He had been kept out too long. Above all, he wanted more definite instructions.

He had been on the point of attacking a Spanish fleet sent out from Cadiz to protect the plate fleet, but he and his council of war ultimately decided that they had no authority to fight. Evidently he had missed a letter of June 13 from Cromwell, in which full authority had been given to him to attack the Spaniards.

Blake spent the winter in England, where his complaints were fully attended to. At his own request he was once more associated with a "general-at-sea," the young Montagu, afterwards the famous Earl of Sandwich. Together the two generals visited the dockyards and made every exertion to equip another fleet.

Blake was quite unfit to go to sea again, but not one of his comrades could be chosen. Monck could not be spared from Scotland; Ayscue, Penn, and Lawson were



EDWARD MONTAGU, FIRST EARL OF SANDWICH
From a painting by Lely in the National Portrait Gallery

either concerned, or suspected of being concerned, with royalist movements. Blake had to go.

The various powers of the Peninsula and the Mediterranean were in a ferment. Their submission had been brought about by terror. Blake's name, like that of Nelson in later times, was worth a fleet. So, in spite of his painful diseases, the hero set out for the last time, in March, 1656, at the head of forty ships.

No more hesitation was to be shown about the Spanish treasure fleets. Blake was to resume his vigilant guard of the Spanish coast, while, if possible, the River Tagus was to be used for a base of operations, and for this purpose King John of Portugal was to be forced into a civility which he was reluctant to show. Blake succeeded in frightening John by threats of capturing the expected Brazil fleet, but although these threats reduced John to reason the outlook was very threatening for the English.

On June 19, writing to Cromwell, Blake reported serious news from Algiers, where thirty men-of-war were ready for sea, and where new frigates were continually being built. He ends with declaring his readiness for "the service of your highness, unto which I stand firmly devoted, and shall endeavour, as much as God shall enable me, to the hazard of all that is dear to me in this world to give real manifestations." Well aware of the dangers gathering round the one man who seemed able to "preserve the commonwealth," Blake wished him to understand that he, at least, might be depended upon.

A most difficult task was now before Blake and Montagu, namely to keep the sea during the autumn and winter on the dangerous coast of Spain, to watch for the plate fleet, and to deal as best they could with the neighbouring powers. Amongst other things, they had to satisfy Cromwell that it was impossible to take either

Cadiz or Gibraltar without a considerable body of troops.

It was a proof of both the enterprise and prudence of Cromwell that he should recommend such measures to his officers, and afterwards abide by their decision. It was creditable to Blake and Montagu that they resolved not to court defeat, even to please Cromwell. On receiving the report from his officers Cromwell recalled Montagu, with some of the ships that were wanted for home service.

Not long before Montagu sailed an important event happened. After a severe fight Captain Stayner succeeded in taking six ships of the plate fleet, and the amount of treasure captured was very large. Paraded through the southern counties to London in thirty-eight wagons, it was the first harvest of the war which the English people had seen. At last a declaration of war was issued.

The enfeebled chief was again left alone, but his last and his greatest exploit was yet to come. Hearing that the other long-delayed plate fleet had put into the port of Santa Cruz in the island of Teneriffe, he instantly sailed to find it in the "Swiftsure", of sixty guns, and at the head of twenty-five ships.

His own modest dispatch gives the story: "After spending several days at Cadiz, and not finding the enemy forward to come forth, it was decided to go to Santa Cruz, where we arrived on the 20th April (1657), and found that the West India fleet was in the harbour, five or six galleons, three being flag-ships and sixteen others. . . . We resolved to attack them, though they were moored close along the shore, which was lined with musketeers, and commanded by the castle and six or seven forts. Yet in four hours they were beaten, and all the ships driven

ashore except the admiral and vice-admiral, which resisted most; but by 2 p.m. one was fired and the other blew up, and by evening all the rest were fired except two that were sunk, and only their masts appeared above water. To complete the mercy, our own ships got off well, though some were maimed and had to be waiped off, and the wind blew right into the bay, and the forts and castle continued to play upon us. We had only fifty slain and 120 wounded, and our ships so soon repaired that in two days we sailed to our former station near St Mary's, where we arrived on the 2nd May. To God be all the glory."

An extract from the little-known autobiography of Thomas Lurting, boatswain's mate of the "Bristol", may throw some light on Blake's dispatch. He had "the command of 200 men in this ship", probably as acting boatswain, the boatswain at this period taking very much the place of a lieutenant, of whom there were very few.

"The wind", he says, "blew very right on the shore, and we coming in, in a latter squadron [Blake having sent in a first division under Stayner, and the "Bristol" apparently being the rear ship of his own division], went under our general's stern to know where we should be; and were answered—'Where we could get room.'

"So we ran in, but could get no room to bring up our ship; so we went astern of all our ships. . . . And when we had brought up our ship we were about half a cable's length from the vice-admiral, just in his wake, or in the head of him; and our captain called to me to make all ready, or get to veer nearer the galleon; 'for I will,' said he, 'be on board the vice-admiral.'

"So we veered to be on board of him; and so fast as we veered towards him he veered from us, until he came

about a musket shot of the shore. Then the captain called to me to get a hawser out of the gun-room port, and clap a spring on the cable. When done we veered our cable and lay just across his hawse, about half a musket-shot from him.

"Then we run all the guns we could on that side towards him, which were in number twenty-eight or thirty, and all hands went to it in earnest. And the second broadside some of our shot, as we judged, fell into his powder-room, and she blew up, not one escaping that we could perceive.

"Then the Spanish admiral was going to serve us as we had served his vice-admiral; which we perceiving, plied him very close with about 28 or 30 guns, and the third broadside all his men leaped overboard, and instantly she blew up."

Lurting goes on to describe the narrow escapes he experienced in setting fire to three galleons which had been run on shore, and how, on working out of the harbour, the great castle fired at his ship, but she was so close that the shot went over her hull.

Comment on this remarkable exploit is unnecessary. Writers of all parties at the time gave it unbounded admiration. And on account of its contrast to the failure of Nelson on the same spot, its fame is still perhaps as great as it ever was.

Cromwell sent his highest approbation of Blake's "Wisdom in the conduct and courage in the execution of this service", and also a portrait of himself in gold and diamonds, for which parliament paid. A day of thanksgiving was also voted. It was the last of many such days for which this faithful officer had given cause.

Only once more do we hear of him before he took advantage of the permission given him to return home.

On July 8 the British consul at Lisbon reported that "Blake had redeemed all the captives at Sallee and concluded a peace." Thus all the pirate ports had been brought to terms. The dying admiral had completed the work given him to do. The evidence of the effect produced by his victories in the whole west of Europe must have gratified the hero, however little he cared for glory or for wealth.

"The general is very weak," the same consul reported. Scurvy and dropsy had numbered his days. On board the "George" he hoisted his flag for the last time, but when the ship cast anchor at Plymouth Sound on August 17, 1657, she only brought in the dead body of the admiral. Blake had died two hours before. Clarke, the captain, reported that the general was very desirous to be ashore, and if God saw it good, that He would add some days for settling his estate, "but his course was finished, and his memorial shall be blessed."

A splendid funeral at the public expense, and a vault in Westminster Abbey awaited his honoured remains. The indignity of "disturbing his bones" frequently laid at the door of the restoration appears to resolve itself into a removal of them, in a respectful manner, from the abbey to the churchyard. No place, indeed, could be considered too sacred for the burial of such a man.

In 1898, the patriotic inhabitants of Bridgwater raised a subscription for the purpose of erecting a statue to his honour on the Cornhill of that ancient town.

In marking out the distinctive points in the career of this great man, we have observed his singular preparation for the work that lay before him, his sincerity and consistency in acting up to his lights, his roll of brilliant deeds, with which scarcely any other naval

officer can compete, and the broad mark which he left on the history of his country.

But the true splendour of Blake's life, apart from his glorious acts, shines forth from his unblemished character, his perfect simplicity, and his absolute contempt of private gain. Additionally we must in fairness mention the care which he showed for his comrades in battle, his generosity, and his sacrifice of the domestic happiness, which was very dear to him on the altar of public service.

The legacy left by Blake to those who succeeded him as commanders of fleets has been already indicated. It was that forts were by no means so formidable against ships as they had previously been considered to be. Of course, if ships were to be matched against forts, the fleet must be properly equipped, the officers and crew thoroughly efficient, and the spirit which animated them courageous and determined. Blake, however, knew how to infuse this spirit into those who served under him. Nor did anyone of his successors in the navy or army, not even Nelson or Wellington, exceed him in his single-hearted devotion to duty, whatever the odds against him, or whatever the consequences might be.

It may also be claimed for Blake that he was the first to organize the navy, and the various administrations connected with it on a uniform plan. In fact, he was the man who, more distinctly than anyone else, superintended the development of the machinery created by the Tudor princes into the form and fashion of modern times.

IV.

SIR GEORGE ROOKE.

(1650-1708.)

GEORGE ROOKE, the second son of Sir William Rooke, of St Lawrence, Canterbury, Sheriff of Kent, was born in 1650. He first served in the navy as a volunteer in the second Dutch war. In 1672 he was a lieutenant of the "London", the flagship of Sir Edward Spragge, in the battle of Solebay.

During the following year he was again with Spragge in the "Royal Prince", in the action of June 4, and he remained in command of that ship when she was disabled, and Spragge shifted his flag to the "St George."

In November he was promoted to the command of the "Holmes", and subsequently he commanded the "Nonsuch", the "Hampshire", and the "St David", in the Mediterranean, under Narborough and Herbert. In 1689 he was in command of the "Deptford", of fifty guns, and in her he took part in the battle of Bantry Bay. Soon afterwards he was sent with a small squadron to the relief of Londonderry, which was then undergoing its famous siege, and was hard pressed.

On this occasion it cannot be said that Rooke distinguished himself. Either he did not understand his orders and did not realize how important it was that the garrison should be relieved, or he did not know the straits to which the defenders of Londonderry were reduced.



ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE ROOKE

From a painting attributed to Michael Dahl in the National Portrait Gallery

For some unknown reason he lay idle in Lough Foyle for nearly six weeks, and finally the boom was broken and the brave garrison relieved by Captain Leake in the "Dartmouth", with Rooke's permission rather than by his orders.

Macaulay and other writers have represented the squadron sent to the relief of Londonderry as under the command of Kirke. But although it is probable that Rooke was instructed to co-operate with Kirke, the latter was certainly not in command. It will be seen that the "council of war" was the bane of Rooke's life.

In May, 1690, Rooke was made a rear-admiral, and with his flag flying in the "Duchess", of ninety guns, he took part in the battle of Beachy Head under Herbert, who by this time was Lord Torrington. In this battle the English were forced to retreat, and to take refuge behind the Gunfleet shoal at the mouth of the Thames.

The most interesting period of Rooke's career was, without doubt, when he was commanding fleets, usually combined fleets of English and Dutch. Frequently he is blamed by historians for his apparent want of decision, and for the frequency with which he called his councils of war. But, in justice to him, it should be remembered that these joint commands were exceedingly puzzling affairs. For instance, in the unsuccessful expedition against Cadiz, in 1702, Rooke had not only to consult the Dutch admirals before decisive action could be taken, but as it was a joint army and navy expedition, the Duke of Ormonde, who commanded the troops, had also to be consulted. At such consultations not only the chiefs of the English and Dutch fleets and the chiefs of the English and Dutch troops were present, but also all the junior admirals and generals. Sometimes even captains and colonels attended.

At a council of war held on board the "Ranelagh," off Cadiz, in September, 1702, we find sixteen men in consultation. Small wonder, then, that there was a lack of vigorous and decisive action. War seems to be an exception to the rule that "in the multitude of councillors there is wisdom."

Councils of war were, however, the custom at this time, and not until later was it discovered that they were a grievous hindrance to a capable commander, a sure source of vacillation and delay.

To form a correct estimate of Rooke's true character and abilities as an admiral is difficult. The records and histories of his time are so obviously biased by personal considerations, or by rabid party feeling, that it is not easy to arrive at the truth even as to bare facts. And when we come to motives, we know that the best and purest are not usually attributed to political enemies.

Party politics are a serious business enough at the beginning of the twentieth century, but in Rooke's days they were more serious still. It was not merely a question of the "ins" and the "outs," and the spoils of office. It was revolution, civil war, impeachment, the dethroning of a king, the change of a dynasty.

Men's passions were unbridled, and political opponents abused each other in no measured terms. Thus we find that the distinguished divine, Bishop Burnet, whose *History of His Own Time* is sometimes spoken of as a standard authority for the history of this period, hated Rooke with that perfect hatred which casts out fear. Burnet never lost an opportunity to attribute to Rooke the worst motives, or to accuse him of the most cowardly and unpatriotic conduct.

Indeed, in the sketch we propose to give of the life of Rooke as an English admiral, we cannot do better than

employ the bishop as devil's advocate, in which rôle he will prove extremely useful.

It has already been mentioned that Rooke was made a rear-admiral in 1690, and as rear-admiral of the red squadron he took part in the battle of Beachy Head, with his flag flying in the "Duchess." This battle ended in the retreat of the English fleet, and in the trial by court-martial of Lord Torrington, who commanded the fleet. Torrington was acquitted of all blame, and it is said that the evidence of Rooke at the court-martial justified both the conduct and the strategy of his commander-in-chief. A justification, let it be added, which has been emphasized by several of our more recent naval historians.

In January, 1692, Rooke was made vice-admiral of the blue squadron, and, as such, he took part in the battle of Barfleur. Louis XIV had collected an army of French and Irish troops at La Hague, with the object of making a descent on the English coast. Then the intention was to march quickly on London, and, assisted by the English Jacobites, to replace James II upon the English throne. But, if this scheme was to succeed, it was necessary that the French should gain at least temporary command of the Channel.

The combined fleet of English and Dutch ships was commanded by Admiral Russell, afterwards Earl of Orford, and the French by the Comte de Tourville. Louis ordered a powerful fleet to be got together under the command of de Tourville, and to anticipate the junction of the English and Dutch fleets; and, expecting that his orders would be obeyed, he sent instructions to fight the English. Afterwards Louis discovered that his orders had not been obeyed, and that the Dutch and English had joined, so then he sent word to de Tourville not to



EDWARD RUSSELL, EARL OF ORFORD

From an engraving

fight; but these latter orders were not received by de Tourville until the day of the battle.

The whole business is a curious illustration of the absurdity of giving the command of a fleet at sea to a civilian on shore:

Bishop Burnet gives an account of the battle of Barfleur, or La Hogue, as it is sometimes called.

“On the 19th May, Russell came up with the French, and was almost twice their number; yet not above the half of his ships could be brought into action by reason of the winds. Rooke, one of his admirals, was thought more in fault. The number of the ships that were engaged was almost equal. . . . The night and a fog separated the two fleets after an engagement that had lasted some hours. The greatest part of the French fleet drew near their coasts; but Russell, not casting anchor as the French did, was carried out by the tide; so next morning he was some distance from them. A great part of the French fleet sailed westward through a dangerous sea called the Race of Alderney. Ashby was sent to pursue them, and he followed them some leagues; but then the pilots pretending danger, he came back; so twenty-six of them, whom, if Ashby had pursued, by all appearance he had destroyed them all, got into St Malo. Russell came up to the French admiral and the other ships that had drawn near the coast. Delavall burnt the admiral and his two seconds, and Rooke burnt sixteen more before La Hogue.”

Commenting on this account of Burnet's, the Earl of Dartmouth remarked: “Was it for burning sixteen of the enemy's ships, or for the wind not serving, that Rooke was so much in fault? For the bishop has specified nothing else to support a party lie that he would willingly have pass for truth, because he hated the man.”

Campbell, too, in *Lives of the British Admirals*, has a very different account of Rooke's conduct in the battle of La Hogue:

"He behaved," Campbell writes, "with distinguished courage and conduct," and it was owing to his vigorous behaviour that the last stroke was given, which threw the French entirely into confusion, and forced them to run such hazards, in order to shelter themselves from their victorious enemies. But the 23rd May was for him still more glorious; for he had orders to go into La Hogue and burn the enemy's ships as they lay."

Campbell then proceeds to show how gallantly Rooke carried out this exploit in the face of great difficulties, and when several batteries of the French upon the coast "were supplied with heavy artillery."

Unable to carry in the ships of his squadron, Rooke, so Campbell tells us, "ordered his light frigates to ply in close to the shore, and, having manned all his boats, went himself to give directions for the attack, burned that very night six three-decked ships, and the next day he burned six more of from seventy-six to sixty guns, and destroyed the thirteenth . . . together with most of the transports and ammunition vessels, and this under the fire of all those batteries I have before mentioned, in sight of the French and Irish troops."

"And yet," Campbell continues, "through the wise conduct of their commander, this bold enterprise cost the lives of no more than ten men."

The Dutch admiral, Van Almonde, also gave a glowing description of this exploit, and as it does not seem that he even knew the name of the man who conducted it, we can scarcely think of his account as anything but strictly impartial.

Therefore it may be said that Rooke's conduct at La



THE BATTLE OF LA HOGUE

From an engraving after a painting by Benjamin West

Hogue was, in spite of Bishop Burnet's carping criticism, all that could be desired. William III, at any rate, praised him, and when the king visited Portsmouth in the following spring, he dined on Rooke's ship and knighted him. It is stated also that the king gave him a pension of £1,000 for life, but it is doubtful if this is true. William usually kept such rewards for his own countrymen.

The convoy of the Smyrna fleet was Rooke's next service. For some time a large fleet of 400 English and Dutch merchant ships had been waiting for convoy to the Levant. A powerful French fleet lay at Brest, and another at Toulon. The French seem to have been well informed of the movements of the English, while the English knew very little of what the French were doing. This was not wonderful when we remember that the Jacobite party was strong, and treachery, even in the highest quarters, was, not without reason, suspected. Be that as it may, Rooke's convoy met with great disaster, and in consequence an angry quarrel took place. The English admiralty certainly had not taken proper means to find out whether the Brest squadron had sailed to the southward, but how far the admiralty and how far the admirals were to blame for this neglect it is now difficult to say.

In May, 1693, Rooke sailed with his 400 merchant ships, and so great was the value of this merchant fleet that special precautions were necessary. So the whole Channel fleet was ordered to see Rooke well past Brest, and thus, as it was thought, out of danger. For in England it was still believed that the main body of the French fleet lay at Brest. It is well to note that the command of the Channel fleet was at this time "in commission", a fact that may have had more to do with the disaster than has been commonly supposed.

The Channel fleet accompanied Rooke and his convoy to a point 150 miles SW of Ushant, and then returned home; whereupon Rooke sailed on, suspecting no danger, until shortly after rounding Cape St Vincent he found himself in the presence of an overwhelming force of the enemy.

In fact, the Toulon and Brest fleets had joined, and the whole navy of France was waiting in ambush for Rooke in Lagos Bay. Against such a force nothing could be done. The convoy and the fleet of merchantmen scattered and fled, and several of the latter were captured, and Rooke first went to Madeira and then came home to Cork. Bishop Burnet, describing the "sudden and unprovided motion of the French fleet", adds, "it looked as if some secret advice had been sent from England acquainting them with our designs."

The whole transaction certainly looked like treachery. Nor can we be surprised at it, for treachery was in the air during the reigns of William and Mary and of Queen Anne, and, indeed, for some years later. Even the great Marlborough stands convicted of playing a double game, and of intriguing with James, after betraying him to William and helping the latter to seize his father-in-law's crown.

Even Rooke's bitterest enemy did not accuse him of treachery in the case of the Smyrna convoy, though the fact that he escaped with most of his ships of war might have lent some colour to the suggestion had anyone made it. He does not, however, seem to have been saddled with any share of the blame for this disaster.

He was, indeed, examined at the bar of the House of Commons, where he conclusively showed that, on some imperfect intelligence of French ships to the southward, he had proposed to proceed cautiously, and would have

passed the enemy in the night had he not been overruled by the majority of the council. Not, he believed, "from any bad design or want of zeal in the commanders, but from their not giving credit to his suspicion that it was the whole French fleet in Lagos Bay."

Rooke was fully acquitted, but this disaster had aroused very bitter feeling in England. Blame was showered upon the three admirals of the Channel fleet, upon the admiralty, and even upon the secretary of state, who was suspected of treachery.

On the other hand, the Earl of Hardwicke says: "I have read many papers relative to this miscarriage, and do not think there was any *criminal management* on the part of the admirals, but undoubtedly an indecisive, unskilful conduct, such as generally attends a divided command and calling of frequent councils of war. The admirals were defective in not sending more frequently to look into Brest; as, knowing where the French lay, would have been the best rule for their own conduct."

Of Rooke it can be truly said that he simply did what he was told to do, and the unanimous opinion of those who have written about it is that he did it very well. Campbell praises him highly for the manner he got out of the difficulty, and saved most of his squadron and many of the merchant ships. According to the Dutch, the loss, great as it was, would have been much greater but for the prudence of Rooke. Even Burnet "does not pretend to find out one wrong step in this whole proceeding." While Dumont, a Frenchman, though an exile in Holland, wrote that "Rooke acquired infinitely more honour than those who commanded the French fleet. For though unable to resist such as attacked him, yet, by his prudence, dexterity and courage, he saved the best part of the fleet committed to his charge."

In the spring of 1697 Admiral Russell was made Earl of Orford, and placed at the head of the admiralty, and Rooke was appointed to command the Channel fleet. Though our fleet was in a deplorable condition the French were not anxious to fight, and the next important service upon which Rooke was employed was in 1700.

Then he was placed in command of a combined fleet of English and Dutch ships, sent to the Baltic to support Charles XII of Sweden against the Danes. This extraordinary youth, who was at this time only sixteen years old, was just beginning his short but extremely brilliant career. There was a combination of the northern powers to take away his dominions, but William came to his rescue and sent Rooke to the Sound, to "preserve the peace of the North." This Rooke did, with much expenditure of ammunition.

Altogether this was a curious business, for it was not peace, and it was not war. We exchanged courtesies with the Danes, but at the same time we shook our fists at each other, and were ready for blows at any moment. Finally it ended with a kind of "bogus" bombardment of Copenhagen, a very different affair from what took place there just a hundred years later under another admiral. "I was sent here to serve your Majesty, but not to ruin the King of Denmark", Rooke answered Charles, when the latter complained that the English bombs flew over and the Dutch fell short of the Danish fleet. The display of force was, however, enough, and peace was signed between Denmark and Sweden on August 18, 1700.

This left King Charles free to deal with the Tsar Peter, who had treacherously attacked him, and, falling upon the Russians with his wonted impetuosity, he smote them, at Narva, with very great slaughter.



KING CHARLES XII OF SWEDEN

From an engraving by Heys

So satisfied were the Dutch with the result of this Danish expedition that they thanked King William for having given the command of it to Rooke. As to which Campbell says: "When Sir George Rooke was so unlucky as to labour under the displeasure of a powerful party in England, he was known and acknowledged in Holland to be the best officer and the greatest seaman of the age. This, perhaps, was the reason that, notwithstanding the difference of parties, King William always preserved a good opinion of him, and employed him as long as he lived in the most important commands."

The services, however, by which Rooke's name will live in history were rendered to William's successor, during the war of the Spanish succession.

This war, which came from the determination of the great powers to curb the ambition of Louis XIV, broke out on the death of Charles II of Spain. Then Louis tried to place his own grandson, Philip, Count of Anjou, on the vacant throne; and against Philip, the Grand Alliance, consisting of the Empire, England and Holland, put forward the Archduke Charles of Austria, the second son of the emperor.

For Spain itself this meant civil war, because the province of Catalonia could not miss the chance to show that it was ready to rebel at any moment. So the Catalans accepted Charles, while the rest of Spain favoured Philip.

On July 1, 1702, a powerful Anglo-Dutch fleet, consisting of fifty sail of the line, sailed from St Helens under the chief command of Sir George Rooke, for the purpose of attacking Cadiz. It carried with it 13,000 troops—9,000 English and 4,000 Dutch—commanded by the Duke of Ormonde.

But the object of this expedition was peculiar, and

more than a little vague. We were not at war with the Spaniards, and we did not want to hurt them, if they would agree to support the House of Austria against the Bourbons in the struggle for the Spanish crown. This, however, the Andalusians, at any rate, were unwilling to do.

The Grand fleet and army arrived before Cadiz on August 12, and anchored at a distance of two leagues from the city. A council of war was immediately held. At this council the Duke of Ormonde insisted that a sudden and vigorous attack on the town should at once be made. But as several of the council, and especially the sea officers, opposed this, it was decided that the army should first take St Catherine's fort and Port St Mary's.

On the next day Ormonde summoned Fort St Catherine, at the same time sending the governor a message that if he did not accept the terms, he should be hanged and his men put to the sword. The governor is said to have replied that if he must be hanged anyway, he would rather be hanged by the Duke of Ormonde than by the governor of Cadiz, and that consequently he would defend the port entrusted to him by the Bourbon king.

It is stated that Rooke altogether disapproved of the proceedings of his colleagues, and considered that such actions were very unlikely to win the Spaniards to the side of the House of Austria. Rooke's instructions were to protect the people of the country, not to provoke them. But Ormonde read his instructions differently, and when he was on shore he was able to act so independently that the difficulties of Rooke's position were considerably aggravated.

And in itself Rooke's position was bad enough. His mission was almost a repetition of the Danish one. It was war and yet not war. The Spaniards were to be



KING CHARLES II OF SPAIN

From a painting by Carreño at Hampton Court

conciliated and protected; and Cadiz was to be bombarded, and captured if necessary, just to show our love for them and our anxiety about their welfare. Our admirals when ordered to fight have generally known what to do; but when they have been told to coerce people without hurting them, they have not always known exactly how to do it. A bombardment, which is composed partly of love and partly of explosives, is so very apt to be misunderstood by those who have to endure it. The expedition against Cadiz failed miserably. Constant disagreement between the naval and military commanders, and frequent councils of war, which decided nothing, were sufficient causes to produce failure, even if Cadiz had not been stronger and better defended than had been expected.

The Duke of Ormonde was undoubtedly eager to fight; indeed, he would have been glad to fight anybody. He wanted to attack the island and town of Cadiz, but was overruled by his colleagues, and, as a compromise, he was allowed to attack Fort St Catherine and Port St Mary's on the shore opposite to Cadiz. These positions were captured, and Port St Mary's was disgracefully plundered, the plunderers being led by two general officers, Sir Henry Bellasis and Sir Charles Hara. Both these officers were put under arrest, and Bellasis was dismissed the service, and Hara, though he escaped public condemnation, did not escape private censure.

Neither bombardments nor the capture of these forts, however, could induce the stubborn Andalusians to support the cause of Austria. And after several more councils of war had been held by the allied commanders, it was resolved to abandon the idea of attacking Cadiz, to embark the troops, and to sail for England before the winter set in.

With regard to this ill-starred expedition Bishop Burnet tells us that, in the first place, "Rooke delayed the sailing of it from England by giving out falsely that the Dutch ships were insufficiently provisioned, a statement which the Dutch admiral promptly contradicted." Secondly Burnet wrote that "Rooke spoke so coldly of the design he went upon before he sailed, that those who conversed with him were apt to infer that he intended to do the enemy as little harm as possible." In connexion with which statement Rooke might well have asked who the enemy was.

Burnet also says: "Advice was sent from Holland of a fleet that sailed from France and was ordered to call in at Corunna. Sir John Munden was recommended by Rooke to be sent against this fleet, but though he came up to them with a superior force, yet he behaved himself so ill, and so unsuccessfully, that a council of war was ordered to sit on him. They indeed acquitted him; some excusing themselves by saying that, if they had condemned him, the punishment was death; whereas they thought his errors flowed from a want of sense; so that it would have been hard to condemn him for a defect of that which Nature had not given him. Those who recommended him to the employment seemed to be more in fault."

We are strongly tempted to say that in writing such an account of this trial, Burnet was maliciously lying. But, at any rate, it affords a good illustration of the manner in which he slanders Rooke on every possible occasion, regardless alike of truth and logic.

A squadron had been detached to the West Indies, and the main body of the fleet was on its way to England, when Rooke heard that the Spanish treasure fleet, escorted by a strong French squadron, had put into the port of



JAMES BUTLER, SECOND DUKE OF ORMONDE
From a painting by Michael Dahl in the National Portrait Gallery

Vigo. The chance to wipe out the failure at Cadiz, and to strike a blow at their real enemy, was too good for the allied commanders to miss.

The Spanish galleons and their escort had secured themselves in the inner harbour of Vigo, off the small town of Redondela. The French commodore had constructed a formidable boom, but no defences were of avail against Rooke's sailors and Ormonde's soldiers. In a very short time the whole of the Franco-Spanish fleet was either burnt, captured, sunk, or run ashore.

Fortunately we have a graphic account of this exploit in the *Life of Captain Stephen Martin*, who commanded one of the bomb vessels in the action. He wrote:

"Early in the morning all the boats of the fleet were employed in landing the soldiers, to the number of 5,000, in order to attack the fort on the starboard sides, and the 'Barfleur' to batter it by sea; and the 'Association' to do the like on the larboard side. A line of twenty-four sail was appointed to attack the boom and force the harbour, Vice-Admiral Hopsonn leading the van with five sail abreast; then a Dutch admiral and five sail, and then Sir Stafford Fairborne in the rear with five sail more, the bombs and fire-ships following close in the rear; and in this manner they made the attack.

"Admiral Hopsonn, with the first five, broke the boom. . . . He was no sooner entered than he was boarded by a fire-ship, which burnt his foresail, but put herself off again with the way she had on coming on board, and soon after blew up; and being a merchant ship laden with snuff, that in some measure extinguished the flames, but almost blinded and suffocated those that were near. This created such a consternation that the first lieutenant, purser, and 100 men of Vice-Admiral Hopsonn's ship

jumped overboard, the greater part of whom were drowned. . . .

“ In short, in less than an hour’s time we were masters of the forts and harbour. The French, as they quitted their ships, either set them on fire or blew them up; so that for some time there was nothing to be heard or seen but cannonading, burning, men and guns flying in the air, and altogether the most lively scene of horror and confusion that can be imagined.”

The French and Spaniards had been prudent enough to land a considerable part of the treasure before the attack took place. So, although a goodly portion was captured, yet it was only a small part of the enormous treasure which was brought by the galleons from the West Indies. After this success at Vigo the Duke of Ormonde wished to winter there with his troops, so that he should be ready to carry on the war in the following spring. He also suggested that Rooke should leave a squadron for the protection of the troops. Rooke, however, did not consider that his instructions authorized him to do this. So the whole expedition returned to England.

During his absence from England Rooke had been returned to parliament as member for Portsmouth, and on his return to the country he took his seat in the House of Commons. Queen Anne also made him a privy councillor, and the House of Commons voted him its thanks in somewhat exaggerated terms.

But in spite of these honours and the appointment of a day of public thanksgiving for the victory, the House of Lords decided to inquire into Rooke’s conduct before Cadiz. This was due to the complaints which the Duke of Ormonde, directly after his return to England, had made against Rooke.

“Accordingly,” Campbell writes, “a committee was appointed to examine into the whole affair; and this they did very effectually, not only by considering the instructions and other papers relating to the Cadiz expedition, but by sending for Sir George Rooke and the principal sea and land officers, all of whom were very strictly examined. Bishop Burnet admits that, in his defence, Sir George arraigned his instructions very freely, and took very little care of a ministry, which, according to the bishop, took so much care of him.

“The truth of the matter was Sir George set the whole affair in its proper light. He showed that throughout the whole expedition the enemy had great advantages; for if it was considered on the peaceable side, they had a King of Spain, called to the succession by the will of the last king, and acknowledged by the best part of the nation; whereas the allies had then not set up any other king, but invited the Spaniards in general terms to support the interest of the House of Austria, which was very inconsistent with the temper and genius of a nation always distinguished for their loyalty; that, on the side of war, the instructions seemed to contradict themselves; for whereas they were empowered to use hostility, the declaration promised peace and protection.”

In the end Rooke was acquitted of all blame, and his conduct was entirely approved of. But Burnet, of course, sneers at this decision, and states roundly that the verdict was against the evidence.

In October, 1703, Rooke was sent over to Holland with a small squadron to embark the Archduke Charles of Austria, who had been declared King of Spain by the allies. He was delayed for some time by contrary winds, and by the Great Storm which shattered his ships. In spite of exertions to repair the damage as soon as possible,

it was December 26 before Rooke arrived at Spithead with the titular King of Spain on board.

In the following February (1704) Rooke took Charles to Lisbon, the King of Portugal, after considerable hesitation, having thrown in his lot with the allies. Only a portion of the fleet was with Rooke; the remainder, not being ready for sea, was under orders to follow him.

The King of Spain (that is to say, the Austrian King; Philip, the Bourbon king, being actually in possession) landed in great state at Lisbon, and remained the guest of the King of Portugal while the development of events was awaited. It is impossible to exaggerate the difficulty of Rooke's position at this time.

His general orders were to support the House of Austria against the French, and, if possible, to put the archduke on the Spanish throne. But he had particular orders not to take any action unless the Kings of Portugal and Spain agreed to it, and, moreover, these kings were by no means in agreement as to the best course to be pursued. He had also positive orders from Queen Anne to relieve Nice and Villafranca, which were threatened by the French. And, further, he was most strenuously urged by Prince George of Hesse-Darmstadt, one of the most gallant and capable generals on the side of the allies, to make an attack upon Barcelona, where he was assured the inhabitants were ready to declare for the Austrian cause with little encouragement; such, for instance, as a mild bombardment. He also was urged to make another attempt on Cadiz, and finally he had to watch the two French fleets, intelligence having been received that another powerful fleet was fitting out at Brest.

Rooke's forces appear to have been scarcely numerous enough to perform all these duties at the same time, and

the end of it was that, after some discussion, he and Prince George, with twenty-three sail of the line—English and Dutch—sailed for Barcelona, and arrived off the town on May 18.

Some Catalans who came on board assured Prince George that the town was ready to revolt, and that if some show of force was made, it would open the gates and declare for King Charles. So the next day some 1,200 English and 400 Dutch marines were put on shore, and were joined by a few Catalan volunteers, about 400 in all.

Some bombs were fired, but the town made no sign, and it was discovered later that the governor had taken the precaution to shut up all the chief men of the Austrian party. As the demonstration was resting entirely on the supposed readiness of the town to receive them, and it had never been intended to undertake the siege with 1,600 men, the troops were re-embarked and Rooke took the squadron to the eastward.

His intention was to wait near the Hyères Islands for the coming of the Brest fleet, which he had been informed was on its way to Toulon. But bad weather dispersed his ships, and they were barely collected together again when the French fleet was seen in the distance, too near Toulon to permit of its being overtaken before it gained the shelter of the port.

This misfortune gave Burnet a chance to say that Rooke, by sailing in the opposite direction, took care not to overtake the French fleet. A statement so profoundly untrue that it is hardly worthy of contradiction.

But the two divisions of the French fleet having now been joined, it would clearly have been bad strategy for Rooke to remain with a greatly inferior force near the enemy's port. He therefore left the Mediterranean to

await the reinforcements which he knew were coming. And on June 17, off Cape St Mary, he fell in with Sir Clowdisley Shovell and his squadron.

This additional force brought Rooke's fleet up to fifty-nine sail of the line, English and Dutch, so that he was strong enough to meet the combined French squadron, should it come out of Toulon. He had, however, by no means a free hand, and was especially hindered by that greatest obstacle to all prompt and vigorous action—frequent councils of war.

Orders from home forbade him to attempt anything against the coasts of Spain, save with the approval of the Kings of Spain and Portugal. And as they had no troops to spare for a joint expedition, Rooke sailed eastward to look for the French fleet. No fleet was to be found, and soon afterwards he received an urgent request from King Charles to make another attempt on Cadiz.

A council of war was of course held, and it was decided that such an enterprise was impossible without troops. But it was suggested that, with the force at their disposal an attack on Gibraltar might be successful.

At this idea Rooke seems to have jumped. He immediately made arrangements for putting it in execution, fearing, no doubt, that another council of war would decide that it was impracticable. And, possibly as a practical joke, he entrusted the actual attack to Rear-Admiral Byng, who had voted against it.

Rooke's official account of what happened was published in the *London Gazette*, No. 4,045, and it would be impossible to improve upon it.

"The 17th July," he wrote, "the fleet being then about seven leagues to the eastward of Tetuan, a council of war was held on board the 'Royal Catherine'; wherein it was resolved to make a sudden attempt on Gibraltar.



ADMIRAL SIR CLOWDISLEY SHOVELL

*From an engraving by Faber after a painting by Michael Dahl, now in the
National Portrait Gallery*

Accordingly the fleet sailed thither, and the 21st got into that bay; and, at three o'clock in the afternoon, the marines, English and Dutch, to the number of 1,800 men, with the Prince of Hesse at the head of them, were put on shore on the neck of land to the northward of the town, to cut off any communication with the country.

“ His Highness, having posted his men there, sent a summons to the governor to surrender the place for the service of his Catholic Majesty; which he rejected with great obstinacy. The admiral, on the 22nd, in the morning, gave orders that the ships which had been appointed to cannonade the town, under the command of Rear-Admiral Byng and Rear-Admiral Vanderdussen, as also those which were to batter the south mole head, commanded by Captain Hickes of the ‘Yarmouth,’ should range themselves accordingly; but the wind blowing contrary they could not possibly get into their places till the day was spent.

“ In the meantime, to amuse the enemy, Captain Whitaker was sent with some boats, who burnt a French privateer of twelve guns at the mole. The 23rd, soon after break of day, the ships being all placed, the admiral gave the signal for beginning the cannonade; which was performed with great fury, about fifteen thousand shot being made in five or six hours’ time against the town, insomuch that the enemy were soon beat from their guns, especially at the south mole head; whereupon the admiral, considering that by gaining the fortification they should of consequence reduce the town, ordered Captain Whitaker with all the boats armed, to endeavour to possess himself of it; which was performed with great expedition.

“ But Captain Hickes and Captain Jumper, who lay next the mole, had pushed on shore with their pinnaces and

some other boats, before the rest could come up; whereupon the enemy sprung a mine that blew up the fortifications of the mole, killing two lieutenants and about forty men, and wounded about sixty.

“ However, our men kept possession of the great platform which they had made themselves masters of; and Captain Whitaker, landing with the rest of the seamen which had been ordered upon this service, they advanced and took a redoubt, or small bastion, half-way between the mole and the town, and possessed themselves of many of the enemy’s cannon.

“ The admiral then sent a letter to the governor, and at the same time a message to the Prince of Hesse to send him a peremptory summons, which His Highness did accordingly; and on the 24th in the morning, the governor desiring to capitulate, hostages were exchanged; and the capitulation being concluded, the prince marched into the town in the evening, and took possession of the land and north mole gates, and the outwork.

“ The town is extremely strong, and had an hundred guns mounted, all facing the sea and the two narrow passes to the land, and well supplied with ammunition. The officers who have viewed the fortifications affirm there never was such an attack as the seamen made; for that fifty men might have defended those works against thousands. Ever since our coming to the bay, great numbers of Spaniards have appeared on the hills, but none of them have thought fit to advance towards us.”

Thus was Gibraltar lost and won. It was taken by the English and Dutch in the name of King Charles III of Spain; and if that prince had managed to gain the Spanish crown, Gibraltar would almost certainly have been restored to the Spaniards.

As, however, Charles was unsuccessful, it was formally



GEORGE BYNG, FIRST VISCOUNT TORRINGTON

From a painting by Jeremiah Davison in the National Portrait Gallery

ceded to England at the peace of Utrecht as part of the spoils of war; and it has since remained in our hands, though more than once we have had to fight for it. On the other hand, if Gibraltar had not been captured by Rooke, it is very unlikely that the question of ceding it to England would even have been discussed at the peace.

Immediately after the capture of Gibraltar, Rooke went to Tetuan to take in water, and on his way back to Gibraltar, on August 9, he sighted the French fleet under the command of the Count of Toulouse. The latter had with him fifty-two sail of the line, some frigates, fire-ships, and twenty-four galleys, so that, on the whole, we may consider that the fleets were not unevenly matched.

When the two fleets first sighted each other, the French were from twenty to thirty miles to the eastward. Of course there was a council of war, and a message was then sent to the small vessels to bring out the marines who had been left in garrison at Gibraltar.

It was mid-day on the 10th before these marines were got on board, and by that time the French fleet was no longer in sight. From the first the French had had the option of fighting, and that they did not avail themselves of it was in accordance with the rules of strategy in vogue in the French navy.

By these rules some "ulterior objective" was the first consideration. The fleet was not at sea mainly to defeat the enemy's fleet, but to aim at some end which might be better won by avoiding action, and so preserving the fleet uninjured.

And here the end to be aimed at was clearly the recapture of Gibraltar, which might be accomplished if the English fleet could be enticed away to the eastward, and if the French fleet could get in between it and Gibraltar before the customary west wind blew through the Straits.

Through the evening of the 10th, and through the 11th and the morning of the 12th, the English fleet worked slowly to the eastward. About noon on the 12th it was off Malaga, when, the haze clearing, the French fleet was seen to the NW in a fair position to interpose itself between the English and Gibraltar.

It seems to have been a prevailing idea in the English fleet that the French had taken the trouble to send the Brest division of their navy to Toulon, and then to send the united fleet from Toulon to Malaga, merely to have the fun of avoiding battle. Possibly Rooke entertained this same idea. If this was the case, at any rate he now understood the nature of their design; and as he knew that the wind might at any time become westerly, he realized also the necessity of engaging at once.

The wind, however, was so light that he was unable to engage on that day, and on the morning of the 13th the position was but little changed. The French were more to the southward, more immediately between the allies and Gibraltar, and, apparently meaning to stay there, were lying to in line of battle, with their heads to the south.

Taking advantage of the easterly wind Rooke bore down on the enemy, and engaged him all along the line, van to van and rear to rear, according to the old fighting instructions which had been handed down to him from the days of Russell and the Duke of York. This was a method of fighting which sought to gain no tactical advantage, and which was unlikely to be decisive. And so it proved on this occasion.

The fight continued from 10.30 a.m. until night closed in, and then the two fleets separated without any advantage having been gained. But both fleets had suffered serious damage, and many of the English ships had used all of their ammunition.



THE EMPEROR CHARLES VI (CHARLES III OF SPAIN)
From an engraving by Weigel.

Probably there was never a bloodier battle fought at sea, with less, on either side, to show for it, but of course each side claimed the victory. The French claimed that they had prevented the allies from attempting anything against Barcelona, or from relieving Nice or Villafranca—projects which had not been thought of for some time. The allies claimed that they had prevented the French from recapturing Gibraltar—which they had certainly wished to do—and had driven them back to Toulon.

One result, however, this battle of Malaga did have. It ended Rooke's career. His political friends put forward Rooke as at least the peer of Marlborough, and the glories of Malaga as equal or superior to those of Blenheim. When the exact story of the battle became known, Malaga was depreciated even below what was just.

The Marlborough faction was all-powerful at the time, and they refused to tolerate a man who had been spoken of as an equal to their chief. Rooke was dismissed from his command, never to be employed again. He lived for only four more years, and died in 1708.

Probably Rooke was the greatest seaman of his age, in any country, but what the calibre of his contemporaries was it is difficult to say. Certainly it is unfair to judge any admiral or general by the standard of a later age, or to accuse him of ignorance because he did not practise tactical methods, which were not introduced until seventy or eighty years after his death. The engaging in parallel lines was and continued to represent the high-water mark of naval tactics, until it was submerged by the practice of Hawke and the theory of Rodney.

And in considering how little Rooke was able actually to accomplish, it must be remembered that he was everywhere tied, by the requirements of the service, to a

divided command. From Londonderry to Malaga he was never independent.

Possibly he might have got over the instructions to hold frequent councils of war, as other admirals got over it. But to confer with his Dutch colleagues was a diplomatic necessity. And between consulting one and consulting a dozen, he may well have thought the difference not worth making a fuss about.

William III, who was not a bad judge of his fellow-men, undoubtedly held a high opinion of Rooke. William knew that he was honest according to a higher standard than that of the age in which he lived.

Though a public servant, Rooke did not intrigue with foreign princes against the king and constitution of England. Though holding high office he did not amass a fortune. But, on his deathbed, he was able to say: "I do not leave much, but what I leave was honestly gotten. It never cost a sailor a tear, or the nation a farthing."



GEORGE, FIRST LORD ANSON

From a painting by or after Reynolds in the National Portrait Gallery

V.

LORD ANSON.

(1697-1762.)

THE name of Anson, although well-known as that of a skilled navigator and of a man who made a remarkable voyage round the world in the eighteenth century, is not, in its wider sense, as familiar as it should be. For it is the name of one who was not only a practised sailor, but also a gallant officer, and an able administrator during some of the most brilliant years in the history of our navy.

The story of Anson's career is one of steady and continual success. The promotions and honours which were heaped upon him, appeared to be awarded solely to merit, and wealth followed in their train.

Though not an old man when he died, he was admiral of the fleet, a peer of the realm, a privy councillor, and for many years he had administered the affairs of the navy and had "organized victory" as first lord of the admiralty.

It was not his fortune to command in great and important actions, but what fighting he had to do was very well done. He not only proved himself to be a good tactician, but also to be gifted with sound judgment, prudence, and dash.

His remarkable voyage round the world, the story of which reads more like a stirring romance than the commonplace narrative of a naval expedition, showed that he was a man of dogged perseverance, and indomi-

table courage. While, during nearly twenty years at the admiralty, during the whole time that he was a flag-officer, he proved himself not only an able administrator, but also a statesman gifted with the power of prescience.

George Anson was born in the parish of Colwich, Staffordshire, on April 23, 1697. Of his early life there is but little to say. He entered the navy in 1712, as a volunteer on board the "Ruby", commanded by Captain Peter Chamberlen. He followed Chamberlen to the "Monmouth", which was paid off in June, 1713.

Doubtless Anson continued to serve at sea, but nothing is certainly known of him until May 17, 1716, when he was promoted by Sir John Norris to be second lieutenant of the "Hampshire." The "Hampshire" was one of a powerful squadron sent to the Baltic to co-operate with the Russians and Danes against the Swedes, and at once protect the trade and induce the King of Sweden to cede Bremen to the Elector of Hanover.

The Tsar was nominally in command of the combined fleet, with Norris as his vice-admiral. But the Swedes remained in harbour, and the demonstration, though politically important, did not include any brilliant achievement. It was renewed in the summer of 1717, under Sir George Byng; and in December the "Hampshire" was paid off.

Soon afterwards, however, Anson was appointed second lieutenant of the "Montagu", and was in her in Sir George Byng's action off Cape Passaro, when, at the age of twenty-one, he received his "baptism of fire."

This battle, fought on July 31, 1718, is remarkable as one of the very few fights in which decisive results were obtained without any great superiority of force. Byng's fleet of twenty-one ships of the line was indeed superior to the Spanish of eighteen, both in number of ships, and

in weight of metal; but the victory was due to Byng's quickness to seize his opportunity, and to the irresolution of the Spanish admiral. The latter could not decide whether to fight or to fly, and his fleet withdrawing in a straggling line, before the wind, was overwhelmed piecemeal. "The English might be rather said to have made a seizure than to have gotten a victory," wrote Corbett, Byng's secretary and the historian of the expedition.

The "Montagu's" share in what fighting there was, is a not inapt illustration of the whole. She and the "Rupert", both 60-gun ships, came up with and captured the "Volante" of 44 guns; and the Spanish admiral's tactics, if so they can be called, permitted a similar disproportion to be the general rule throughout the engagement.

This engagement gave young Anson but little experience of hard fighting. It did, however, give him an object-lesson as to what a capable commander could do with an unwilling or undecided enemy. It is strange that three men (Mathews, Lestock, and Byng) who took part in the engagement, showed subsequently that it had conveyed no lesson to them.

In October, 1719, Anson was transferred to the "Barfleur" carrying the flag of Sir George Byng, and he remained in this ship until, in June, 1722, he was promoted to the rank of commander, and appointed to the "Weasel" sloop. In February, 1724, he was advanced to post rank, and appointed to command the "Scarborough" frigate.

His rapid promotion—for he was not quite twenty-seven and had been but twelve years at sea when he attained his captain's commission—has been, perhaps truly, put down to his close relationship with Lord Macclesfield, who had become Lord Chancellor in 1718.

It is, however, only fair to assume that it was due also to the zeal and aptitude which he had shown as a young officer, merits which had undoubtedly gained for him the esteem and approval of his superiors.

As soon as the "Scarborough" was ready for sea, she was sent out to the coast of South Carolina, to protect our commerce against the depredations of pirates from the Bahamas, or the almost equally piratical *guarda-costas* from the Havana.

The station and Anson seem to have mutually suited each other. What work there was to do was effectively done; but both pirates and raiders were restrained in their covetous desires by the mere knowledge that ships of war were on the station; and though the ships occasionally made the round of the Bahamas, they had, on the whole, a pleasant time at Charlestown and other ports on the coast.

Of Anson, Mrs. Hutchinson, a South Carolina lady, in a letter* to her sister in London, wrote:

"He has good sense, good nature, is polite and well-bred; free from that troublesome ceremoniousness which often renders many people extremely disagreeable. He is generous without profusion, elegant without ostentation, and, above all, of a most tender, humane disposition. At balls, plays, concerts, etc., I have often the pleasure of seeing, and sometimes of conversing with Mr. Anson, who, I assure you, is far from being an anchorite, though not what we call a modern pretty fellow. . . .

"But I would convince you that all I have said of Mr. Anson is not merely panegyrical. I will give you an account of his faults as well of his virtues; for I have nowhere said he is an angel. It is averred that he loves his bottle and his friend so well that he will not be very soon

* Quoted by Sir John Barrow in his *Life of Lord Anson*.

tired of their company, especially when they happen to be perfectly to his taste, which is pretty nice as to both. . . ."

In July, 1728, Morris, the captain of the "Garland", a frigate of the same force as the "Scarborough", died. And as the "Scarborough" was badly in need of repair, Anson, who was now senior captain on the station, ordered her home. He himself moved into the "Garland", in which he remained out for another two years.

In July, 1630, he was recalled, and was appointed to the "Diamond", a 40-gun frigate, attached to the fleet which, in 1731, went out to the Mediterranean under the command of Sir Charles Wager. The special object of this expedition was to escort the Spaniards to Leghorn, in accordance with the terms of the treaty of Vienna. It was a splendid function, gaudy with bunting and noisy with salutes, though rather a failure when considered as the seal and token of the pacification of Europe. But such seals of pacification generally have been failures.

At the end of the year Anson was again sent for service on the South Carolina station, where he remained till June, 1735. After which he was on half-pay for two years and a half, practically his first holiday since he had joined the navy.

It is, however, worthy of notice that during this time, since his promotion to commander's rank in 1722, he had, with the exception of the one year in the Mediterranean, been almost entirely cut off from naval society and associations.

The lonely cabin of a frigate on a remote station may have been a good place for the study of history, geography, or the theory of navigation, but was not so well adapted for lessons in naval tactics, strategy, or administration. And however pleasant Anson found the society and

amusements of the station, it is difficult to understand how his life was helping him to deal with the severe work which lay before him, and on which he entered in December, 1737.

Then he commissioned the 60-gun ship "Centurion", and sailed for the west coast of Africa, with instructions to protect our trade, to visit the forts and trading ports, and then to cross over to Barbados, where further orders would be awaiting him. He did not reach Barbados till the autumn of 1739, and he received orders to return at once to England, for war with Spain was imminent. He arrived at Spithead on November 10. On October 19 war had been declared.

The origin of the quarrel suggested that hostilities should begin with an attack on the Spanish settlements in the West Indies, and be followed by attacks on the west coast of South America or of Mexico, and in the western Pacific.

Some months before the declaration of war Vernon had been sent out to the West Indies, where, on November 21, "he took Porto Bello with six ships."

The news of this did not reach England until the following March, and the excitement caused by it did much to upset the plans already made. It was determined to send out a large fleet and considerable army to reinforce Vernon, and to this every other plan had to give way.

Anson who, it had been decided, was to command a squadron which was to destroy the Spanish ports and shipping on the west coast of America, found that his expedition was to be a much smaller affair than had been intended.

The demands of the West Indian fleet exhausted the dockyards of stores and the ports of seamen; of soldiers

there were none, even those sent to Vernon being raw recruits.

Thus the equipment of Anson's squadron was very much delayed, and though he received his commission on January 10, 1740, and his instructions were dated January 31, they were not officially delivered to him till June 28.

The squadron as finally determined on, was thus composed:

	Guns	Men	
"Centurion,"	40	400	Commodore George Anson.
"Gloucester,"	50	300	Captain Richard Norris.
"Severn,"	50	300	" The Hon. Edward Legge.
"Pearl,"	40	250	" Mat. Michell.
"Wager,"	28	160	" Dandy Kidd.
"Trial,"	8	100	" The Hon. Geo. Murray.

And two victuallers.

These numbers are "the establishment," or number of men ordered to be borne by ships of the different classes. It will be seen that on leaving England the "Centurion" actually had 506 men on board, and the "Gloucester" 374. The "Trial" on the other hand, had only 81.

The victuallers were of about four hundred and about two hundred tons, and were to proceed with the expedition until there was room on the ships for the extra provisions, and then they were to be discharged.

But even when the commodore had his instructions, and the composition of the squadron was settled, much remained to be done. The ships were not manned, seamen could not be got; and of the 500 soldiers who were to form part of the expedition, none had been raised.

Anson went down to Portsmouth with instructions to

Sir John Norris, then commander-in-chief there, to supply him with 300 seamen, the number he required.

But Norris, an old and obstinate man, positively refused to weaken the crews of the ships under his orders to such an extent, and would only provide 170, of whom 32 were discharged from hospital in order to make up the number. And with this Anson had to be satisfied.

Then again, instead of getting a regiment of soldiers, as originally arranged, to act as land forces when required, Anson was informed, almost at the last moment, that all the troops that could be spared to accompany his expedition were Chelsea pensioners, men who had been invalided out of the army, and were in receipt of out-pensions from Chelsea Hospital.

“As these out-pensioners consist of soldiers who, from their age, wounds, or other infirmities,” we read in *Anson's Voyage Round the World*, “are incapable of service in marching regiments, Mr. Anson was greatly chagrined at having such a decrepid detachment allotted him; for he was fully persuaded that the greatest part of them would perish long before they arrived at the scene of action, since the delays he had already encountered necessarily confined his passage round Cape Horn to the most vigorous season of the year.”

“Sir Charles Wager too joined in opinion with the commodore, that invalids were in no way proper for this service, and solicited strenuously to have them exchanged: but he was told that persons who were supposed to be better judges of soldiers than he or Mr. Anson, thought them the properest men that could be employed on this occasion.”

The service on which the expedition was to be engaged was acknowledged to be one in which hardships and privations of no ordinary nature would have to be



ADMIRAL SIR JOHN NORRIS

From an engraving by Burford after a painting by the same

endured; yet in view of all this, it was decided by the military authorities to send these poor invalids—of whom many had been crippled in the service of their country, and the majority had their constitutions undermined by long service in unhealthy and pestilential climates—on a long sea voyage, and a passage round Cape Horn into what was then an almost unknown sea.

The account of these poor men continues: "Indeed it is difficult to conceive a more moving scene than the embarkation of these unhappy veterans: they were extremely averse to the service they were engaged in, and fully apprised of all the disasters they were afterwards exposed to; the apprehensions of which were strongly marked by the concern that appeared in their countenances, which was mixed with no small degree of indignation, to be thus hurried from their repose into a fatiguing employ, to which neither the strength of their bodies, nor the vigour of their minds, were any ways proportioned."

The pensioners, themselves, at any rate, did not think that they were "the properest men" to be sent on the proposed service, for those of them that had the use of their legs ran away before they could be sent on board. And so Anson was left with "such as were much fitter for an infirmary than for any military duty."

It may be mentioned, in anticipation, that not one of these poor wretches, thus embarked, survived the terrible hardships of the voyage. They all perished miserably from scurvy and privation, and most of them before the ships reached Juan Fernandez. To supply the deficiencies 210 raw and undisciplined recruits were drafted into the squadron from different regiments, and with this scratch lot Anson was forced to be content.

It was not until September 18 that Anson managed to get away from England with his squadron, and to start

on the voyage which had been so long hindered by vexatious delays. The general tenor of his instructions was to capture, sink, burn, or otherwise destroy any ships under the Spanish flag, that he might fall in with, and to harass and annoy the Spaniards generally, by seizing and capturing any of their towns or other possessions.

There was a special clause permitting him to look out for and, if possible, to capture the Spanish galleon which sailed annually from Acapulco to Manila with a rich and valuable cargo; and permission was also given him to return by China, or back round Cape Horn, as he should judge best.

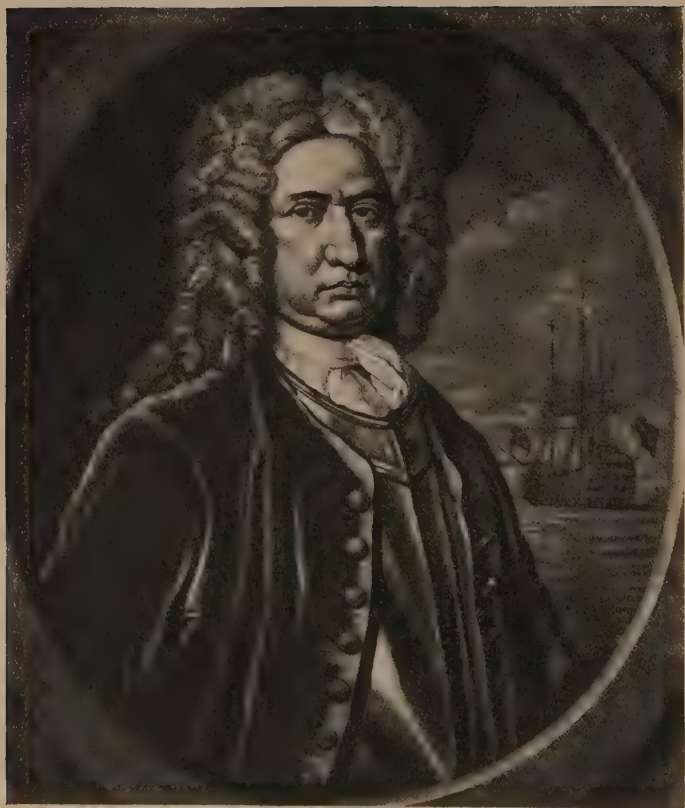
Necessarily his orders were so worded as to leave much to his own discretion, more particularly with regard to the places he was to visit, and the period of his absence from England.

After a passage of forty days he arrived at Madeira, where he stayed for a week, and sailed again on November 3.

Shortly afterwards, the first symptoms of scurvy appeared; that dreadful disease which was to play such an important part in the enterprise, with a persistent and fatal effect, to which there are few parallels in the annals of navigation.

Bad weather, wet decks, crowded, ill-ventilated sleeping accommodation, clothing ill-adapted to the frequent climatic changes, innutritious and insufficient food, were all predisposing causes towards the promotion and development of one of the most terrible diseases with which sailors can be afflicted. And although everything that suggested itself to the naval and medical authorities of the ship was done to stop its ravages, or to lessen the sufferings of the men, no remedy was of any use.

Very anxious to get the sick on shore, the expedition



ADMIRAL SIR CHARLES WAGER

From an engraving by Faber after a painting by Gibson

reached the Island of St Catharine, on the coast of Brazil, towards the end of December, 1740, but although a stay of nearly a month was made upon the island very little benefit was derived from it as far as the sick were concerned.

From St Catharine the squadron sailed on January 18, and having stopped at Port St Julian, they entered Le Maire Strait on March 7, 1741, with a fair wind and favourable weather; but they had scarcely passed through it, when they were assailed by furious gales of wind, in which the ships were scattered, never to meet again.

The "Severn" and the "Pearl", beaten back to the eastward, and unable—with their men sick and dying—to get round Cape Horn, returned to Rio Janeiro and England.

The "Wager" was lost on the iron-bound coast of Tierra del Fuego; and though her men escaped to land, they suffered the most terrible hardships before they reached the Spanish settlements and were permitted to return to England; as was related by one of her midshipmen, the Hon. John Byron (afterwards an admiral), in what his grandson, the poet, called "my granddad's narrative."

But for those ships that succeeded in getting round Cape Horn, the passage was awful. The weather was persistently bad, the wind foul, and the scurvy raged with almost unexampled virulence.

"Soon after our passing Streights Le Maire, the scurvy began to make its appearance amongst us, and our long continuance at sea, the fatigue we underwent, and the various disappointments we met with, had occasioned its spreading to such a degree that at the latter end of April there were but few on board who were not in some degree

afflicted with it, and in that month no less than forty-three died of it on board the 'Centurion.'

"But though we thought that the distemper had then risen to an extraordinary height, and were willing to hope that as we advanced to the northward its malignity would abate, yet we found, on the contrary, that in the month of May, we lost near double that number; and as we did not get to land till the middle of June, the mortality went on increasing, and the disease extended itself so prodigiously that, after the loss of above two hundred men, we could not at last muster more than six fore-mast men in a watch capable of duty."*

It is impossible to realize the anxiety that must have been felt by the commodore. A man of less unyielding material would probably have abandoned the enterprise altogether; nor, with his ships scattered, and half the crew of his own ship dead, could he have been blamed for doing so.

Such a course, however, does not seem to have occurred to Anson. With his rigid ideas of discipline, with his scrupulous adherence to orders, and considering also that his own reputation was at stake, he steadily and persistently held on his way, hoping to find the other ships waiting to meet him at the appointed rendezvous off the Island of Socoro.

The "Centurion" arrived off Socoro on May 8, and here she cruised for a fortnight in constant danger of being driven on to the coast, and in the hope of picking up some of the missing ships. As none appeared, Anson proceeded to the second rendezvous, the Island of Juan Fernandez.

But through an unfortunate error in navigation, or rather by an uncertainty of their longitude, they missed

**Anson's Voyage Round the World.*

the island, and lost no less than twelve days in trying to find it.

The consequences of this blunder were terrible; for during this time they buried between seventy and eighty men, whose lives might most probably have been saved had they succeeded in reaching their anchorage at the earlier date. They anchored at Juan Fernandez on June 9.

At this time only a little over 200 men remained alive on board the "Centurion", out of more than 500 (including the invalids and soldiers) that left England in her only nine months before; and the majority of the survivors were so incapacitated by disease and weakness that they could not do any work of even the lightest kind.

On the same day that the "Centurion" cast anchor off Juan Fernandez, another of the squadron, the "Trial", made her appearance. Out of her small complement of eighty-one men, she had buried no fewer than thirty-four, and the remainder were so afflicted with scurvy that only the captain, one lieutenant, and three men were able to perform any duty connected with the working of the ship.

Steps were at once taken to remove the sick of both ships to the shore, but the majority of the sick were in such a hopelessly weak state that they had to be carried out of the ships in their hammocks, and afterwards to be carried on from the shore to the tents which had been erected for them. During the removal more than a dozen poor fellows died from exhaustion and exposure to the air.

Notwithstanding abundance of fresh provisions, for the sea was teeming with fish, the valleys were full of fruit and vegetables, and the hills abounded with wild goats, in spite also of the rest and quiet on shore, more than three weeks passed before the mortality ceased.

During the first ten days of their occupation of the island, they rarely buried less than six men daily.

On June 21, a sail was descried from the look-out on the top of the hill, but after being in view for a short time, the weather became so thick that she was again lost sight of. Those on shore were greatly distressed, for they naturally concluded, after their own experiences, that her crew were utterly worn out by sickness.

On the 26th, however, the ship again appeared, and proved to be the "Gloucester." The fears had been only too well founded, for to such a pitiable and helpless condition had her crew been reduced, that more than a month passed before the ship could be brought into the anchorage.

The state of this ship was even more deplorable than that of the two others. She had lost more than two-thirds of her crew, and those that remained alive were so feeble that they were utterly incapable of work. Consequently the ordinary duties of working the ship devolved entirely on the officers and servants, who presumably from having better food in some respects, superior accommodation on board, and more active minds, did not suffer in the same proportion as the remainder of the crew.

By the beginning of September all symptoms of the disease which had attacked them were apparently eradicated, and the ships were ready to make a move.

But the death-roll was an appalling one. Since leaving St Helens, the "Centurion" had lost 292 men, and had only 214 left, the disease had played greater havoc with the invalids and marines than with the sailors, for out of fifty invalids and seventy-nine marines who had been on board the "Centurion" only four invalids and eleven marines were left.

The "Gloucester" had fared still worse; out of a smaller complement, she had buried the same number of men as the "Centurion", and had only eighty-two remaining alive. On board the "Gloucester" only two marines out of forty-eight were still living, and all of the invalids were dead.

The "Trial" did not suffer so badly as the other two ships, though she suffered badly enough. Forty-two of her complement had been buried, and thirty-nine remained.

To sum up; out of the 961 men who had left England in these three ships, 626 had died within twelve months.

The question which Anson now had to decide was of the utmost importance. For what could he hope to accomplish with the force at his disposal so weakened and reduced? With only three ships, most inadequately manned, his original intention to attack the larger Spanish settlements—such as Callao, Lima, and Panama—appeared out of the question; even the Acapulco ship, if met, might easily prove too formidable an antagonist.

It was not in Anson's nature to return to England and report a failure. So, after consulting with the other captains, it was decided that the ships should, for a while, cruise separately off the coast of South America, in order to pick up the Spanish merchant vessels sailing from Callao to Valparaiso.

In September they left Juan Fernandez. The "Gloucester" was sent to the northward. The "Centurion", with the "Trial", went off to Valparaiso, where several prizes were taken. When the Spaniards, who were captured in the "Carmelo" by the "Centurion", first saw the "Trial", they took it for granted that she had not come from England with the rest of the squadron, and insisted "that it was impossible such a bauble as that

could pass round Cape Horn, when the best ships of Spain were obliged to put back."

Soon afterwards, however, the "Trial" captured a large merchant ship called the "Arranzazu." But to balance this piece of good fortune it was discovered that the "Trial" herself was so unseaworthy that she had to be scuttled and sunk.

One of the prizes, under the name of "Trial's Prize", took her place, for it was exceedingly important, at any rate, to keep up the appearance of strength. Others of the prizes kept company with their captors, and the coast was kept in a state of alarm by the appearance of an English squadron of some six ships, which, in reality were manned by a collective force of 250 men.

In the beginning of November they went north to join the "Gloucester", and on the 10th, being off the town of Paita, Anson sent in a strong party under the command of Mr. Brett, then second lieutenant of the "Centurion." This party took possession of the town, sacked it, and finally set it on fire, as the governor, who had fled on the first alarm, refused to treat for its ransom.

The booty actually brought off amounted to something more than £30,000, and consisted of wrought plate, dollars, besides rings and jewels. But the loss to Spain by the destruction of the rich merchandise stored in the place was estimated at not less than £300,000.

Two days after leaving the ashes of Paita they fell in with the "Gloucester", which had made two prizes. One of these was a large boat, the crew of which declared that they were very poor, and that their cargo only consisted of cotton. When, however, the cargo was taken on board the "Gloucester" and examined, there was a most welcome surprise in store. For a large amount of double

doubloons and dollars, amounting to nearly £12,000, was found hidden in the jars of cotton.

Having joined the "Gloucester", the squadron went north by easy stages, with the intention of looking out for the Manila galleon on her way to Acapulco. But as it had been given out that the return galleon, from Acapulco to Manila, would sail on March 3, 1742, only a fortnight later, they cruised in the expected tracks for some weeks.

Anxiously they looked out for this galleon, but no ship appeared, until, at last, Anson feared that his presence had been discovered, and that, in consequence, the departure of the galleon had been deferred. Finally they gave up watching, and withdrew to Chequetan to refit, and to supply themselves with water, of which—when they arrived—they had only enough on board to last six days more.

While at Chequetan Anson made up his mind—if nothing further was heard of the galleon's sailing—to cross the Pacific to China, where he hoped once more to find the conveniences of civilization, conveniences, be it said, which he had been compelled to do without for some twenty months.

In preparation for this voyage, on account of the very small number of men at his disposal, he burnt the prizes which had kept up the hollow appearance of a powerful squadron. The men, with some negroes and Indians, but, all told, fewer than the full complement of the "Centurion", were divided between her and the "Gloucester."

Finally, after picking up their boat which had been keeping a constant look-out off Acapulco, and landing all the Spanish prisoners, who "could not enough extol the humanity with which they had been treated", they lost sight of the mountains of Mexico on May 6.

The voyage was a distressing one. Through ignorance

of the limits of the trade winds of the Pacific, the ships were kept on a course along the thirteenth parallel of north latitude, which in the summer months is to the southward of the north-east trade.

The wind was thus uncertain, the weather unsettled, the passage extremely long, and as the scurvy again broke out with as great virulence as before, and men were being buried at the rate of eight, ten, or twelve a day, it seemed extremely likely that the ships would be left without seamen to work them, or officers to navigate them.

In a violent storm, a few days after the ships had left the coast of Mexico, the "Gloucester" lost her main-mast, and consequently she sailed so badly that the "Centurion" had repeatedly to lie to for her. Later on the "Gloucester" suffered even more severely in a heavy storm, and Anson was informed—when the storm had abated and communications between the boats could again be held—that the "Gloucester" had seven feet of water in her hold, although every available man had been pumping for hours.

There was only one thing to do under the circumstances, and that was to abandon the "Gloucester." So after the men had been removed from her to the "Centurion", and as much as possible had been saved in the way of prize-money and provisions, she was set on fire on the 15th, and on the following morning she blew up.

Ten days later the "Centurion" reached the island of Tinian, one of the Ladrões, and anchored there on the evening of the 28th, but to such a state of weakness were her men reduced that five hours were spent in furling sails.

Here they found fresh meat in plenty, fruit and vegetables, and the men speedily began to recover, and although twenty-one died on the first two days, in the

following two months the number of deaths did not exceed ten.

On September 22 the "Centurion", when Anson was on shore, was driven out to sea by a terrific storm and strong tide, and she did not succeed in returning to Tinian until October 11. During all this time those on shore were fearful that she would never appear again, while those on board encountered great hardships and privations.

The "Centurion" was again driven out to sea on her return, but on this occasion only for some five days, and she finally left Tinian on October 21; and on November 12, without further incident worthy of special notice, Macao was reached. Here the ship underwent a very necessary refit, her stores and provisions were replenished, and twenty-three men—some of them Dutch, but mostly Lascars—were added to her crew.

It was the beginning of April before the ship was ready for sea, and long before this the Chinese had become so uneasy that a deputation was sent to Anson to ask him to leave their port. To this request Anson answered that he would go "when he thought proper and not sooner."

Then the Chinese stopped all provisions from being supplied to him, and as he was as anxious to depart as the Chinese were to get rid of him, he sailed from Macao on April 19.

Still intent on carrying out as much of his instructions as possible, he shaped a course so as to try to intercept the Spanish galleon on her way from Acapulco to Manila. He expected that as he had stopped one ship from going in the previous year from Acapulco to Manila, probably two ships would be sent during this year.

But his force for such an attempt was very small. The number of people on board the "Centurion", all

told—officers, seamen and boys, negroes, Indians and Lascars—was only 227. He knew, however, that his ship was better fitted for a fight than the galleon was likely to be, and in a speech to his men he encouraged them so successfully that they expressed themselves perfectly ready to undertake additional adventures. To make amends for this numerical weakness, the men were daily exercised at the great guns and small arms, and in firing at a mark, so that in a very short time many of them became excellent shots.

But as the days passed by, and no ship was seen, disappointment and anxiety increased, which is shown by the journal of an officer then on board the "Centurion":

"May 31. Exercising our men at their quarters, in great expectation of meeting with the galleons very soon.

"June 3. Keeping in our stations and looking out for the galleons.

"June 11. Begin to grow impatient at not seeing the galleons.

"June 13. The wind having blown fresh easterly for the forty-eight hours past, gives us great expectations of seeing the galleons soon."

Indeed the commodore's plans were so well judged that on June 20—two months after leaving Macao—they came in sight of a large ship which, as she drew near, hoisted Spanish colours, with the standard of Spain at the main top-gallant masthead.

There was no apparent desire on her part to avoid a contest, for though the "Centurion" hoisted her colours and the commodore's broad pennant, the galleon ran down to meet her, trusting in her great size and the number of men she had on board.

In the meantime Anson had prepared the "Centurion"

for an engagement, while the Spaniards had failed to clear their ship, and Anson, perceiving this, gave orders that guns should be fired at them with a view to interrupt them in their work, though previously he had given orders not to engage until the enemy were within pistol-shot.

The Spaniards, in fact, were not trained to arms. The ship was not efficiently armed, and what guns she had were blocked by the merchandise which lumbered her decks.

A vivid account of the fight is given in Lord Anson's book: "And now the engagement began in earnest, and for the first half-hour Mr. Anson over-reached the galleon and lay on her bow, where, by the great wideness of his ports, he could traverse almost all his guns upon the enemy, whilst the galleon could only bring a part of hers to bear. Immediately on the commencement of the action the mats with which the galleon had stuffed her netting took fire and burnt violently, blazing up half as high as the mizen-top.

"This accident, supposed to be caused by the 'Centurion's' wads, threw the enemy into the utmost terror, and also alarmed the commodore, for he feared lest the galleon should be burnt, and lest he himself too might suffer by her driving on board him. However, the Spaniards at last freed themselves from the fire by cutting away the netting and tumbling the whole mass, which was in flames, into the sea.

"All this interval the 'Centurion' kept her first advantageous position, firing her cannon with great regularity and briskness, whilst at the same time the galleon's decks lay open to her top-men, who having at their first volley driven the Spaniards from their tops, made prodigious havock with their small arms, killing or wounding every officer but one that appeared on the

quarter-deck, and wounding in particular the general of the galleon himself.

“ Thus the action proceeded for at least half an hour; but then the ‘Centurion’ lost the superiority arising from her original situation, and was close alongside the galleon, and the enemy continued to fire briskly for near an hour longer; yet even in this posture the commodore’s grape-shot swept their decks so effectually, and the number of their slain and wounded became so considerable, that they began to fall into great disorder, especially as the general, who was the life of the action, was no longer capable of exerting himself.

“ Their confusion was visible from on board the commodore, for the ships were so near that some of the Spanish officers were seen running about with much assiduity to prevent the desertion of their men from their quarters.

“ But all their endeavours were in vain, for after having, as a last effort, fired five or six guns with more judgment than usual, they yielded up the contest, and the galleon’s colours being singed off the ensign staff in the beginning of the engagement, she struck the standard at her main top-gallant mast-head; the person who was employed to perform this office having been in imminent peril of being killed, had not the commodore, who perceived what he was about, given express orders to his people to desist from firing.”

The “Centurion” was nearly deprived of the prize, for which her men had been so ardently hoping, by a fire close to her own powder-room, but this fire was fortunately discovered and extinguished before any great harm was done.

When the fight was over Anson determined to make for the river of Canton with his prize, and on July 11 he came to anchor off the city of Macao.

By this time the amount of treasure which had been captured was known; 1,313,843 pieces of eight, and 35,682 oz. of virgin silver had been taken, and with the treasure that had previously been secured, the whole amount taken by the "Centurion" must have been worth about £400,000. At a modest computation the damage done by Anson must have amounted to £600,000, so that the whole loss which this expedition inflicted upon the Spaniards must have reached quite a million sterling.

Ultimately Anson sold the galleon to the merchants of Macao for 6,000 dollars, a price considerably less than her real value, but Anson was anxious to get to sea for these reasons. He had heard enough from the English at Canton to guess that the war with Spain was still going on, and that the French might be assisting Spain before he could get back to England. So, knowing that the news of his prize and the treasure he had taken could not be heard in Europe if he hurried back, he determined to run no unnecessary risks by stopping to bargain with the merchants.

On December 15, 1743, the "Centurion" sailed on her return to England, and on March 11 she anchored in Table Bay. There the ship remained until the beginning of April, and on April 19 they sighted the island of St Helena. By June 12 they sighted the Lizard, and on the evening of the 15th, "to their infinite joy," the "Centurion" anchored at Spithead.

"But that the signal perils which had so often threatened them in the preceding part of the enterprise might pursue them to the very last, Mr. Anson learnt on his arrival that there was a French fleet of considerable force cruising in the chops of the Channel, which, from the account of their position, he found the 'Centurion'

had run through, and had been all the time concealed by a fog.

“ Thus was the expedition finished, when it had lasted three years and nine months, after having, by its event, strongly evinced this important truth, that though prudence, intrepidity, and perseverance united are not exempted from the blows of adverse fortune, yet in a long series of transactions they usually rise superior to its power, and in the end rarely fail of proving successful.”

During this remarkable voyage the “ Centurion ” had circumnavigated the world, and her crew had passed through more terrible vicissitudes, and had endured more hardships, privations, and sufferings than fall to the lot of ordinary mortals.

In spite, however, of the losses both of ships and men, the expedition must be regarded as, in a great measure, a successful one. And this success must be attributed entirely to the unflagging energy, fertility of resource, temper, tact and skill of Anson.

The result was to cripple the power of the Spaniards in the Pacific for the time being, to make them very fearful for the safety of their South American possessions, and to deprive them of an immense amount of treasure.

After such a long and dangerous voyage Anson and his companions might have expected a cordial welcome on their return to England. The authorities at Whitehall, however, thought differently, and though they promoted the commodore to be rear admiral of the blue, and Peircy Brett, the first lieutenant of the “ Centurion ”, to be captain, they refused to confirm a commission as captain which Anson had given to Brett nearly a year before.

In this refusal they were technically in the right, for the promotion had not been to a vacancy, but merely to command the “ Centurion ” under the commodore, who

was, by his own commission, distinctly barred from having a captain under him. Unquestionably Anson had exceeded his powers, but, under the circumstances, it would have been a graceful act to have allowed the irregularity and to have confirmed the commission. Lord Winchilsea, who was then first lord of the admiralty, and his colleagues refused to do so, and consequently Anson begged leave to decline his own commission as rear-admiral of the blue. At the next promotion, however, of admirals, on April 23, 1745, Anson was promoted to be rear-admiral of the white. But this was by a new admiralty. In December, 1744, the Duke of Bedford had become first lord of the admiralty, and had appointed Anson to a seat on the board. On the next day Brett's commission as captain was confirmed to its original date.

Anson took office at a time when the affairs of the country, in their relation to other European powers, were in a very unsatisfactory state. It was especially necessary that the department of naval administration should be in the hands of a strong man. The action of our navy during the past twelve months had been far from brilliant.

France, after helping Spain in an underhand manner for three years, had at last determined openly to be hostile. Her fleet, joined with the Spanish fleet, had come out of Toulon and fought the action of February 11, 1744, and had not been defeated. Another French fleet, intended to support the invasion of England by a French army, assembled at Dunkirk, had come up the Channel as high as Dungeness, on February 24, and had not been crushed.

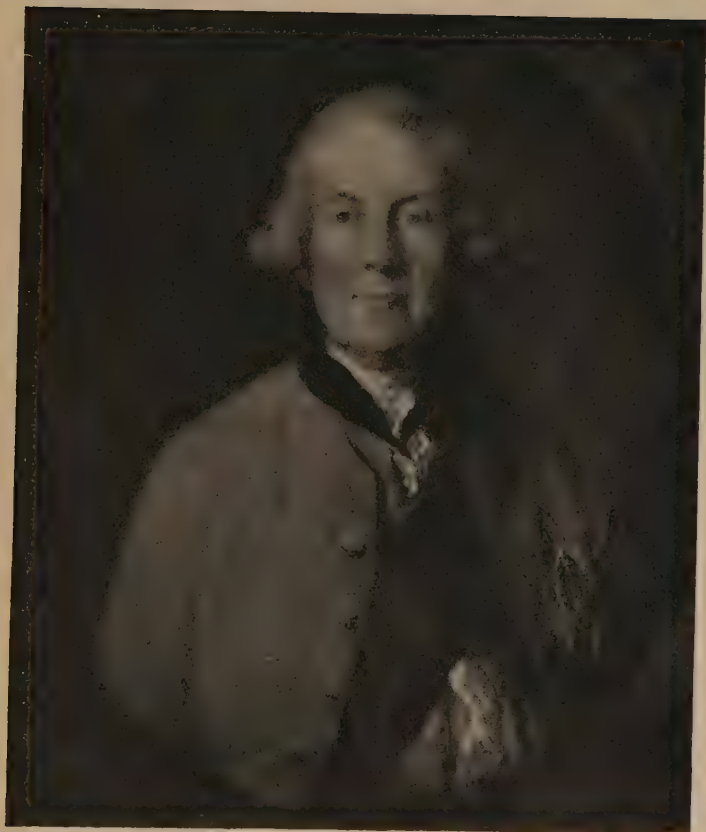
War had been declared by France on March 20, and by England a few days later. But neither ministry nor

admiralty had done anything to show that they were ready for the task in front of them.

The new admiralty showed little promise of being better than the old one. The Duke of Bedford, though a man of some ability, was neither then nor afterwards known as anything better than a party politician. Lord Sandwich was very young, and without either knowledge or experience; Lord Archibald Hamilton and Lord Vere Beauclerk, the two other naval members of the board, were nonentities. The one saving point was that both Bedford and Sandwich were content to leave as much work as possible in Anson's hands. And when they were away, as they often were, they practically—and much to Lord Vere's annoyance—deputed their authority to Anson, who also had a seat in the House of Commons, as member for Heyden, in Yorkshire.

In 1746 Anson became a vice-admiral, and while he was a member of the board of admiralty he showed great energy in trying to bring about a better state of affairs in the navy. For instance, it was due in a large measure to him that the construction of our men-of-war was improved, and more especially to build vessels in classes, so that the stores and fittings of each ship in the same class should be interchangeable, by which system a great saving in expense and convenience would be gained. More attention was also given to the seaworthiness and sailing capabilities of our ships, matters which, although vitally important, had been almost entirely neglected.

A scheme was also drawn up for the promotion and subsequent retirement of flag-officers. Hitherto admirals had been promoted from the captains' list by selection, and though those who were passed over were understood to be shelved, they still remained on the list, receiving only a captain's half-pay. This was felt to be



JOHN RUSSELL, FOURTH DUKE OF BEDFORD

From a painting by Gainsborough in the National Portrait Gallery

a hardship, and a superannuation scheme was introduced by which those captains who had been passed over were, under certain conditions of service, promoted to be rear-admirals on a retired list. In the official language of the day they were promoted to be rear-admirals in the fleet, not of the blue, or white, or red squadron; but colloquially they were spoken of as "of the yellow squadron," and captains retired in this way were said to be "yellowed." There is every reason to believe that Anson brought this idea forward, and worked out its details, and, by his influence with the Duke of Bedford, obtained the Order in Council which approved it. It was at this time, too, that regulations were issued establishing a uniform to be worn by naval officers, though it was at first chiefly confined to flag-officers and captains. The coats were of blue cloth, with white cuffs and collars.

Anson, however, was not wholly occupied with office work, with reforms in dress, and the construction of ships, important and valuable as those duties were. Though practically at the head of the naval administration, he hoisted his flag in August, 1746, as commander-in-chief of the "western squadron" (what we now call the "Channel fleet"), and cruised off Ushant. He hoped to intercept the French squadron homeward bound from the coast of Nova Scotia, but this squadron avoided him by keeping further to the south, and Anson, learning that it had got into Brest, returned to Portsmouth and to the admiralty.

Again he hoisted his flag in the following spring, and on April 9, 1747, sailed from Plymouth to look out for two French squadrons, which were about to sail for the purpose of reinforcing the fleets in North America and in the East Indies, keeping company for mutual support as far as Cape St Vincent, whence they were to proceed to

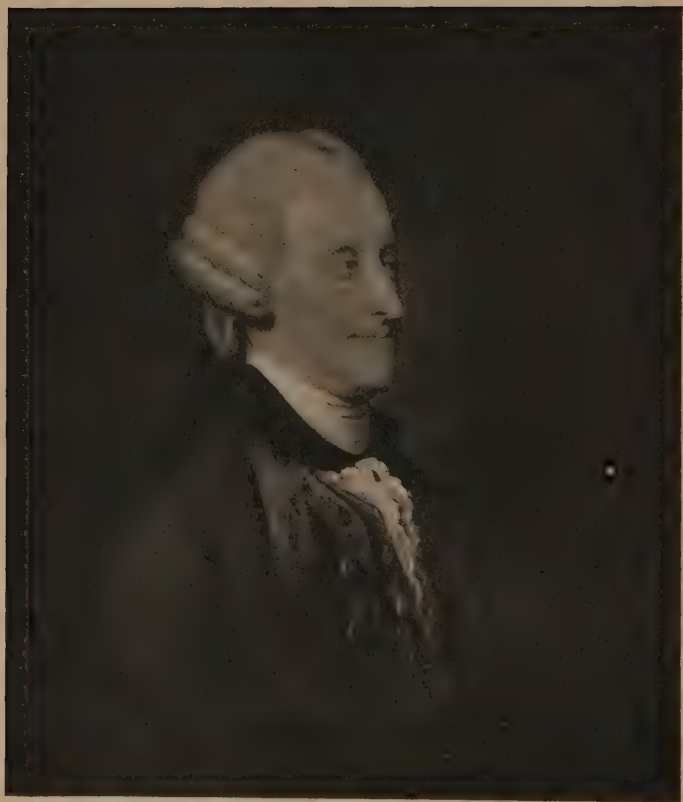
their respective destinations. To frustrate these objects was thought to be exceedingly important, and Anson, arranging his plans with skill, fell in with the combined squadrons off Cape Finisterre on May 3. Immediately he made sail towards them.

At half-past one in the afternoon he signalled for his fleet to form in line of battle ahead, but later on he realized the inferiority of the enemy, and seeing that their sole object was to escape by night, he threw out the signal for a general chase, and to attack the enemy without any regard to battle formation. This, considering his superiority of force, he was justified in doing, and the result proved how correct his judgment was.

By evening every ship of the enemy, with both the admirals, had surrendered to Anson's squadron; and, additionally, the ships which he had detached at the outset to pursue the enemy's convoy secured several valuable prizes.

This was a crushing defeat to the French, and great credit was due to Anson for the masterly way in which it had been achieved. It is reported that twenty large wagons were required to convey the treasure from Portsmouth to London, where it was escorted to the Bank in a grand procession and amid the enthusiastic shouts of thousands of people. Many of the houses along the route were illuminated, and numerous bonfires were lighted.

Although Anson's success cannot be regarded as a great and brilliant victory, it was, at any rate, an event of the highest importance. Not only was it a serious reverse to the enemy, but it also was the complete discomfiture of two expeditions, specially organized to cripple our naval power in two parts of the world; and after the many recent events which had added neither fresh fame



JOHN MONTAGU, FOURTH EARL OF SANDWICH
From a painting by Zoffany in the National Portrait Gallery

nor renown to our arms at sea, it was received with a burst of enthusiasm which might seem to have been excessive, had not the nation been waiting eagerly for some successful naval exploit. On Anson's arrival in England he was most cordially received by the king, and on June 13 was raised to the peerage by the title of Lord Anson, Baron of Soberton, in the county of Southampton. At the same time his second in command, Rear-Admiral Peter Warren, was made a Knight of the Bath.

In February, 1748, the Duke of Bedford became one of the secretaries of state, and Lord Sandwich succeeded him as first lord of the admiralty. But when Sandwich was appointed plenipotentiary for the negotiations at Aix-la-Chapelle, he virtually deputed Anson to act in his place at the admiralty, putting Lord Vere Beauclerk on one side. To this Lord Vere strongly objected, and Anson wrote to Sandwich to the effect that it would be disagreeable to him to act under Lord Vere. To which Sandwich replied from the Hague:

"I have very little time to write by this post, but I would not lose a moment to desire that you would consider yourself as in effect at the head of the admiralty; that you would not only write to me your sentiments as to any measures you would wish to have executed, but that you would also make use of my name whenever it may be necessary."

And a few days later Sandwich wrote again: "I am sorry Lord Vere remains at the board, if that is any way disagreeable to you; but I think that so far from his being able to make a cipher of you, that you must put him absolutely in that situation himself. I always told you that whenever I got to the head of the admiralty it should, except in the name and show of it, be the same thing as if you were there yourself; and I beg you to

consider my being there simply as an addition to your power. I have told the Duke of Newcastle that, in admiralty business, he must consider you as one and the same thing with me, and that I intend to depend entirely upon you, and to throw the direction of the whole as much as possible into your hands. . . . You may be assured I will do no act whatever but directly through your hands, which will plainly show people where the power centres."

It was at this time, April 25, 1748, that Anson married Elizabeth, daughter of the Earl of Hardwicke, at that time Lord Chancellor. Though the marriage was probably, in the first instance, a sort of "family compact," it appears also to have been one of sincere affection.

On October 18, 1748, the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was signed, and Anson was able to attend more exclusively to the reformation of the navy. One of his best innovations was to institute annual visits of inspection to the several dockyards, in which, as Anson knew too well, jobbery and corruption were almost recognized as the ordinary methods of business.

The official tour of the admiralty did something towards stopping this evil, and although, for sixty years more, the dockyards continued to be sinks of iniquity, they were perhaps never quite so corrupt as they had been during the War of the Austrian Succession.

The war, which had brought to light the iniquities in the dockyards, also brought to light many weak places in the discipline and organization of the fleet, and thus gave rise to the celebrated Act of Parliament so long known as the Articles of War. This Act was "for amending, explaining and reducing into one Act of Parliament the laws relating to the Government of his Majesty's ships, vessels, and forces at sea." It passed in

1749, and remained in force, with a few slight alterations, for more than a hundred years.

Another measure of Anson's, which was introduced a few years later, was the establishment on a permanent footing of the corps of marines—that is to say, soldiers borne for sea service as part of the naval establishment, under the control of the admiralty, entirely distinct from the army. Previous attempts to establish a corps of marines had failed because this distinction had not been made, and though enlisted for service at sea, both officers and men had considered themselves as primarily belonging to the army, and therefore independent of naval discipline. The corps established by Anson in 1755 has continued to the present time, and has shared honourably in the achievements and the glories of the naval service.

In June, 1751, when Sandwich was summarily dismissed from the post of first lord of the admiralty, Anson was nominated as his successor. Doubtless family interest had something to do with this appointment, yet no wiser one could have been made. For six consecutive years Anson had been to all intents and purposes head of the admiralty, and his experience of naval affairs was as valuable as it was wide.

He was looked upon as a clear-headed, shrewd man of sound common sense and judgment, and with an unequalled knowledge of the capabilities and merits of the senior officers of the navy. And when, four years later, war again broke out with France, it was due to Anson that England was better prepared to meet her enemies at sea, than she had been on any previous occasion.

From the beginning of the war in the spring of 1755 we were able to send out powerful fleets, which controlled the Atlantic and the Bay of Biscay, protected the

English trade, secured the Channel Islands, and swept French commerce off the sea.

The government was persuaded that France would accompany, or precede, a declaration of war by trying to invade England in force, and so there was a natural determination to keep the main strength of the navy in western waters. There were, however, such persistent reports of an expedition against Minorca that they could not be entirely ignored. In consequence of these rumours a strong squadron was, early in 1756, sent to the Mediterranean under Admiral Byng, with instructions to support or relieve Minorca, if that island should be threatened or attacked. But if, as was considered to be more probable, the Toulon squadron had gone to North America, a proportionate number of ships, under the command of Rear-Admiral West, was to be sent after it.

Byng, before leaving England, represented that his force was not strong enough for the service required of him. But his objections were overruled, and he was assured that when he was joined by the ships already in the Mediterranean, he would have at his disposal a force equal, if not superior, to that of the enemy. He also complained that his ships were badly manned and were short of complement. At that time newly-commissioned ships were nearly always badly manned, and those of Byng's squadron were neither better nor worse than usual. Technically, however, they were short of complement by the number of marines they should have carried. But to make this a grievance almost amounted to a quibble.

As it was thought possible that the garrison of Minorca might have to be reinforced at once, an order was issued that the marines were to be sent on shore, and that Byng was to receive, in place of them, a regiment of soldiers,



ADMIRAL JOHN BYNG

From an engraving

who could, if they were required, be immediately landed at Minorca. These soldiers were borne in the ships as "supernumeraries"; but were effectively part of the ships' companies until the time came for them to be landed, and as the marines would have also been without sea training, there was in reality no difference in the efficiency of the detachment.

Of Byng's failure on this expedition, and how he suffered for it, are matters of history with which we are not concerned. What does concern us is the measure of Anson's responsibility for the disaster. At the time public indignation was ready to vent itself not only on Byng, but on Anson, and on all the members of the government. Against Anson, in particular, feeling was especially strong, for, if Byng was incompetent, Anson had appointed him, and if the squadron was too weak, as Byng said it was, Anson had told off the ships of which it was composed, and was responsible for its weakness.

Byng was hurriedly recalled by the ministry as soon as his failure was known. But after his arrival in England the Duke of Newcastle bowed before the popular anger and resigned. Anson went out of office with Newcastle, and had nothing at all to do with the conduct of affairs from November, 1756, to June, 1757, during which time Byng was tried by court-martial, found guilty of criminal neglect, sentenced and executed.

Anson's opinion of the finding of the court was neither expressed officially nor publicly, but he certainly agreed with it. His judgment in nominating Byng to the command, when Byng at the time was the senior available admiral, was never seriously questioned. And no one, in or out of parliament, doubted that the fear of an attempted invasion justified the admiralty and ministry in refusing to send out to the Mediterranean a stronger

squadron than seemed necessary. That Byng's squadron was equal to the French squadron was abundantly shown before the court-martial.

When, in June, 1757, the Newcastle-Pitt administration was formed, Anson returned to the admiralty, and during the next five years—years as brilliant as any in the history of our navy—he was largely responsible for the constitution of our fleets, the organization of our expeditions, and the general strategy of our campaigns.

To have nominated to high commands men like Hawke, Boscawen, Osborn, Saunders, Rodney, Howe and Keppel, is in itself a distinction and a glory which has fallen to few administrators. Meanwhile he passed a bill through Parliament for the more regular and frequent payment of the wages of seamen, and the bill also enabled sailors to remit a portion of their wages to their families. This seems, by the common sense of the thing, so much a matter of course, that at the present time some effort may be required to understand the great stride towards improving the comfort of the seamen which Anson's measure effected, imperfect and partial though it was.

The only active service which Anson himself undertook during the war was the command of the Grand Fleet off Brest in the summer of 1758, and this he possibly undertook to soothe the ruffled feelings of Sir Edward Hawke, who thought that he had been slighted. Very likely the personal relations of Anson and Hawke were not those of warm friendship; but it is well to state that each of them was too great a man to allow any private feeling to stand in the way of the public service.

For the rest, though Anson took no active command himself, feeling, possibly, that with such subordinates his post of duty was in Whitehall, the results of his ministry are very glorious to read. The reduction of Louisbourg,

in 1758, not only by the direct action of Boscawen, but by the indirect action of Osborn and Hawke; the destruction of the flat-bottomed boats at Havre; the defeat of De la Clue at Lagos, and of Conflans among the rocks of Quiberon Bay; the reduction of Quebec, followed by the conquest of Canada; the capture of Guadeloupe, Martinique, Belle Isle, Havana, and Manila.

Glorious as all these successes were for the commanders on the field of battle, they were almost equally glorious for the minister whose care and prudence and forethought provided the ships, the stores, and the men which rendered these victories possible.

But the end of this Anson was not to see. Probably the hardships of his voyage in the "Centurion" had severely tried his constitution. The change from an active life in the open air to being shut in an office may have tried it in another way; and the death, on June 1, 1760, of his wife, to whom he was greatly attached, was a shock from which he never fully recovered. He died almost suddenly at his seat, Moor Park, near Rickmansworth, on June 6, 1762.

Anson's professional reputation rests on a somewhat different basis from that of his more brilliant colleagues. A man of undaunted courage, cool and steady in the presence of danger, of great resolution, patient under difficulties, and of quick and comprehensive judgment, he won a large share of credit by his voyage round the world, and also by his smart and most timely little action off Cape Finisterre.

But the board of admiralty was the field of his greatest distinction. There he held sway for seventeen years, and if we mention again some of his achievements it is only because they were supremely important.

Not only, then, did he provide Hawke, Boscawen, and

their colleagues with the weapons which they knew so well how to use, but he overcame the difficulties which had for so many years prevented a corps of marines from being established. He amended and tightened up the discipline of the navy and the practice of courts martial. He improved the design and construction of ships, and the fitting of the guns, their carriages, breechings and tackles. Lastly he instituted the inspection of dockyards, a superannuation for officers, and a system of regular payments for seamen.

And he did all this work without noise and without self-advertisement. He was a man of modest manners, not brilliant in society, never speaking in parliament, and with no talent for conversation. He was described by Sir Charles Williams as "having been round the world but never in it."

It is only when we remember the many glories, the many important administrative measures, and the numerous smaller improvements which were crowded into his period of administration, that we are able to realize that he was effectively, as well as officially, the trident-bearer during a time of great change and unparalleled splendour.



ADMIRAL SIR EDWARD HAWKE

From an engraving by Hansson after a painting by Verdlen

VI.
LORD HAWKE.

(1705-1781.)

It would seem very strange that the name of Hawke should be comparatively unknown to the average Englishman of the present day, were it not that, even in his lifetime, his services were tardily acknowledged and grudgingly rewarded.

This tardy recognition may have been due partly to his lack of family interest, and still more, perhaps, because he was devoted to his profession, and meddled little with politics and not at all with party. His business, he declared by his actions, was "to keep foreigners from fooling us." Other reasons, of a more personal nature, will appear in the course of the narrative.

Edward Hawke, the son of a barrister, whose family had been settled in Cornwall for many generations, was born in London in 1705. On the mother's side he was great grandson of Sir William Fairfax, of Steeton—cousin of Lord Fairfax, the parliamentary general—and nephew of Lieutenant-Colonel Martin Bladen, who had served with Marlborough in Flanders and in Spain as *aide-de-camp* to Lord Galway.

From 1717 to his death in 1746, Bladen was a commissioner of trade and plantations and a member of parliament, and was thus able in some degree to forward the career of his nephew, whose guardian he became on the death of the boy's father in 1718.

In February, 1720, young Hawke entered the navy as a volunteer on board the "Seahorse", commanded by Captain Thomas Durell, with whom he continued for five years on the North American station and in the West Indies.

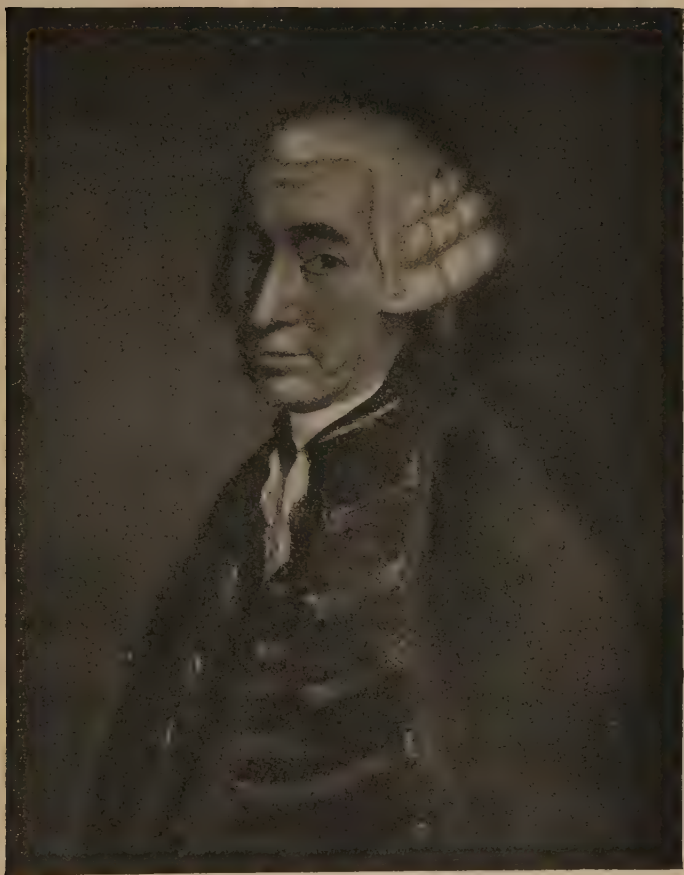
When the "Seahorse" returned to England Hawke passed his examination, and afterwards was for a couple of years on the coast of Africa, and in the West Indies in the "Kinsale." In April, 1729, he was promoted to be third lieutenant of the "Portland", and in January, 1732, he was appointed to the "Scarborough" with his old captain, Durell, with whom he went again to the North American station.

In November, 1732, he was promoted by Sir Chaloner Ogle to be commander of the "Wolf" sloop, and in March, 1734, he was made captain of the Flamborough, in which ship he remained until September, 1735, when she was paid off in England and Hawke was placed on half-pay.

All of this was peace service and uneventful, if any sea service in those days can be properly so called. But for nearly sixteen years he had been constantly employed at sea, and at the age of thirty he had thoroughly learned his profession under such capable officers as Durell and Ogle. He did not go afloat again until the outbreak of the war with Spain in 1739.

The navy of the eighteenth century, and more especially of the first half of the eighteenth century, was, in its daily life and discipline, as different as it is possible to imagine from the navy of to-day. Allowing for a great deal of exaggeration, we are compelled by much corroborative evidence to accept the picture of life on board ship as drawn by Smollett in *Roderick Random* as substantially correct.

Smollett himself served as junior surgeon's mate on



TOBIAS GEORGE SMOLLETT

From a painting by an Italian artist in the National Portrait Gallery

board a ship of the line in the fleet which went out to the West Indies in 1740, and he was present at the unsuccessful attempt on Cartagena in 1741.

The experiences of his hero are referred to the same date, and are probably, to some extent, autobiographical. He describes the berth in which he and the other surgeon's mate had to live as "a gloomy mansion," six feet square, enclosed with canvas, "with a board by way of a table."

When he saw "the sick berth or hospital" he was much less surprised that people should die on board than that any sick person should recover. In this connexion, he says: "I saw about fifty miserable, distempered wretches, suspended in rows, huddled one on another, and deprived of the light of day as well as of fresh air, . . . destitute of every convenience necessary for people in that helpless condition."

The story of Captain Oakum, who is enraged at there being sixty-one on the sick list, and declares that he will have no sick in his ship, is almost incredible. The tyrant is represented as ordering all the patients to be brought on deck, and examining them, calling them skulkers and lazy vagabonds.

One man "just freed of a fever, and so weak that he could scarcely stand" was sentenced to receive a dozen lashes; others were punished in various ways. Some died, and the sick list was reduced to less than a dozen. In all of this there is possibly a good deal of fiction, but it is probable that there is also a good deal of truth.

The description of a gale which they encountered soon after they put to sea shows an utter lack of discipline and also of seamanship. No doubt, as a landsman, Smollett exaggerates, but he represents officers and sailors as "running backwards and forwards with distraction in their looks, hallooing to one another, and

undetermined what they should attend to first"; masts falling over the side and so on. It is a certain fact that very much later than this time, masts frequently did go over the side in any stress of weather. The rope was extremely bad, and the standing rigging most unscientifically fixed.

This is bad enough, but the victualling seems to have been worse. During the attack on Cartagena the seamen are said to have "languished for five weeks on the allowance of a purser's quart per diem of fresh water for each man. Their provisions consisted of putrid salt beef, to which the sailors gave the name of Irish horse; salt pork of New England, which, though neither fish nor flesh, savoured of both; bread from the same country, every biscuit whereof, like a piece of clock-work, moved by its own internal impulse, occasioned by the myriads of insects that dwelt within it; and butter, served out by the gill, that tasted like train oil thickened with salt."

This is the landsman's view of the service painted with the licence of the novelist. So, though probably accurate in its leading features, Smollett may be considered to have given a distorted and false picture of the whole.

We have, however, the unanimous testimony of every naval officer whose opinion is recorded, that the life of the seaman at that time was cruelly hard. In the first place, he was often pressed and forced to serve, just as he had returned home in a merchant ship after a long voyage, and was hoping to spend some time with his wife and children.

Then his lodging on board was foul and dismal, and his clothes, through the fraudulent alliance of contractors and pursers, were often made of the most inferior shoddy. His victuals frequently were loathsome, and when to these was added a noontide ration of half-a-pint of new



ADMIRAL VERNON

From a painting by Gainsborough in the National Portrait Gallery

rum served neat, and practically as much more as any man could buy, beg, or steal, it may easily be understood that drunkenness and the crimes that follow drunkenness were of everyday occurrence.

And a large number of the officers were as bad as the men. Even on shore, life away from the court and London society was rude; on board ship it was naturally ruder. But during the long peace the navy had been allowed to "run down," and when officers were wanted for the large fleets they had to be drawn largely from the mercantile marine. These men were of coarse manners, and were ignorant of discipline and of everything except seamanship of a certain kind.

In time some of these men became commanders and captains—not very many, but enough to give a bad name to all. So there was a lowering of the whole standard, and officers who were not coarse in the first instance were infected by the prevalent rudeness, and imitated the coarseness of their social inferiors until the habit of it became a second nature. With ship's companies without training, and also without discipline, badly fed, badly clothed, and wasted with scurvy and fever, and with officers ignorant and brutal, success in war could not be expected.

Well might Walpole predict, in 1739, that the "ringing of bells" for joy at the war, which he had been forced to declare, would soon be followed by "wringing of hands." Probably he did not know much of the details of the navy, but he must have known that, during nearly twenty years, he had neglected the armed services of the country, and consequently could expect nothing but defeat.

And the failures of Vernon in the West Indies after his first success at Porto Bello, Mathews's unfortunate action

in the Mediterranean, only redeemed by Hawke's personal share in it, and many other miserable affairs, all tended to justify Walpole's prophecy. Indeed this prophecy would have been even truer than it was, had it not been for the good fortune which brought to the front a number of brilliant men. Foremost among these were Anson, Warren, Hawke, Boscawen, and, somewhat later, Saunders, Pocock, Rodney, Howe, and Keppel.

It is an old proverb that a bad workman complains of his tools. It is as true that a good workman often turns bad tools into good ones, and this is what Hawke did. He changed the whole tone of the service; he raised the standard of duty among officers and men; and by his care for the comforts of his men, and by his constant attention to detail he showed how much depended upon their well-being.

We can now better understand the position of affairs as far as the navy was concerned in 1739, when the long dispute with Spain as to the freedom of trade in the West Indies ended in the declaration of war. Hawke, at this time, commissioned the 50-gun ship "Portland" for service among the Leeward Islands, with his headquarters at Barbados; his principal duty being to cruise among the lesser Antilles, and to convoy fleets of merchant ships to the Tortugas and elsewhere.

His cruising was without incident, for no Spanish ships came his way. But from his letters we catch glimpses both of his own care and seamanship, and of the miserable state of his ship. He asks the admiralty to allow him to refit at Boston each year during the hurricane months, instead of, as was usual, at Antigua. "It is generally," he writes, "the fatigue of heaving down that causes a sickness among the people; but at this place we can work the men with safety."

To this proposal the admiralty gave their assent, but it was subsequently withdrawn, owing to representations from West Indian merchants. In this letter we get an idea of Hawke's foresight and consideration for his men, as well as of the constant work of heaving down, which, in the absence of docks, was the recognized way of overhauling a ship.

Notwithstanding his care, the ship was so unhealthy and old that many deaths occurred. Not only the ship but her masts were quite rotten. In November, 1741, she got into a storm off Boston, and made very bad weather of it. In a sorry plight she reached Barbados by the middle of December, when Hawke reported that the stumps of the old masts, when taken out, were found to be so rotten that they crumbled to powder, and that a stick was driven a full yard into the fore-mast. A year later, when the ship was brought home to be paid off, he wrote, on arriving in the Channel, that he was afraid to move further than Portsmouth without another ship to keep him company.

A few months later Hawke commissioned the "Berwick", a new ship of 70 guns, for service in the Mediterranean. The large fleet already in the Mediterranean, together with the fleet in the West Indies, had made seamen especially hard to find at home. A "hot press" filled the ship up with human beings. But in August, when she dropped down to the Nore, Hawke reported that several of the pressed men were "very little, weakly, puny fellows that have never been at sea, and can be of little or no service. What is worse," he added, "most of these poor creatures are now sick: there are several of them that, if they remain on board, will breed a sickness in the ship."

It is not, therefore, surprising that shortly after passing

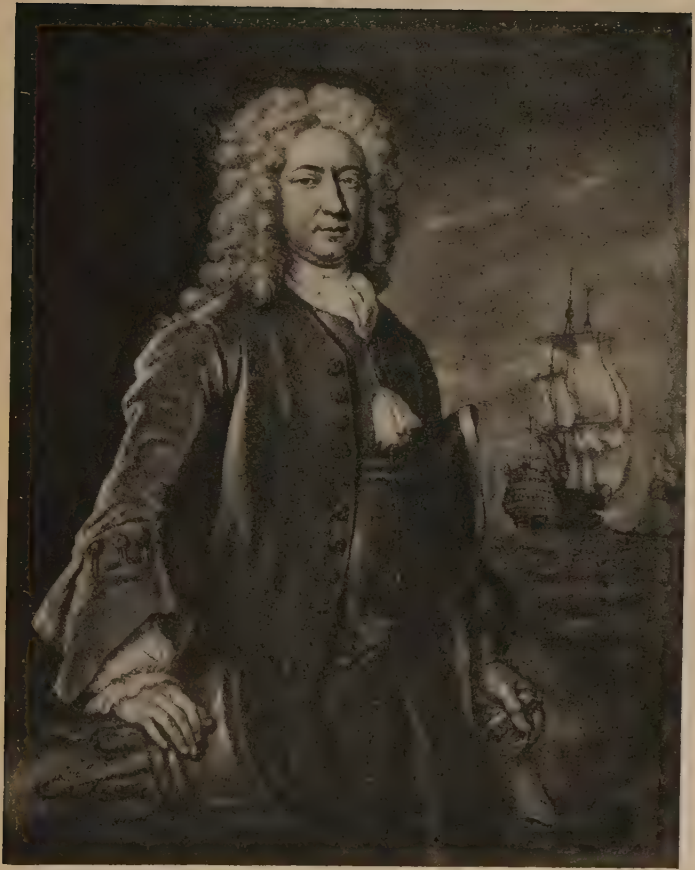
Gibraltar, he wrote that 123 of his working men were sick, and that many of them were poor, puny fellows picked up by the press-gangs in London.

A press-gang, which was a small party of men under an officer, had two functions which are very commonly confused. The one, to raise men by enlistment, that is by paying them a prest or imprest of one shilling; the other to arrest forcibly, that is to press seamen. No man could be legally pressed who was not a seamen, but any man could be prested. And as a certain head-money was paid for every man raised, any man who offered himself was prested without scruple, even though he might be a "weakly, puny fellow."

In addition to his unhealthy men Hawke also had a raw, green, and damp ship which defied all his efforts to keep her clean and dry. At Port Mahon he landed the sick and probably got a draft of fresh men from the merchant ships. Finally he joined the fleet at the Hyères Islands on January 11, 1744.

The position of affairs in the Mediterranean was peculiar at this time. Two years before the Spanish fleet, flying before Vice-Admiral Haddock, had been joined by the French (then nominally neutral), and had been escorted by them to Toulon. There it had since remained, and was virtually blockaded by the English fleet, at first under the command of Haddock, afterwards of Lestock, and finally by Admiral Mathews, who was sent out in the twofold capacity of commander-in-chief of the fleet and ambassador at the Court of Turin.

England, at war with Spain on a quarrel of her own, was supposed to be at peace with France, but by its fleet at the Hyères Islands was preventing all reinforcements and supplies being sent to the army from either France or Spain.



ADMIRAL NICHOLAS HADDOCK

From an engraving by Faber after a painting by Gibson

Every day, however, it became more and more necessary that these reinforcements should be sent, and with Sardinia hostile it was impossible to send them by land. The only way, then, was to send them by water in spite of the opposition of the English fleet.

Accordingly, in December, 1743, orders were sent to the French fleet at Toulon to get ready for sea, together with the Spanish ships. And at the same time an invasion of England was arranged from Dunkirk, nominally commanded by Prince Charles Edward, and escorted by the fleet from Brest.

With the failure of this attempt, we are not now concerned. If it was intended to induce the English to weaken their fleet in the Mediterranean, it did not even succeed in this. The force in the Channel was enough for all possibilities; and Mathews, knowing of the preparations that were being made in Toulon, called in all his ships. By the beginning of February Mathews had collected his whole force in the roadstead of Hyères. And when on February 8, 1744, the allied fleet came out of Toulon, the English also got under way.

In material force the two fleets were fairly equal, England having twenty-eight ships of the line against twenty-seven French and Spanish. But the ships of the combined fleet were, on the average, bigger and more heavily armed than those of the English, and were also in a much better condition. On the other hand, the superiority of the English in frigates was considerable, and eight 50-gun ships, though now, for the first time, held to be unfit for the line of battle, might very well support it.

But any advantage the English might have had from this, or any other cause, was more than overbalanced by the personal ill-feeling that existed between the Admiral

and Lestock, his second in command. The two men were enemies of long standing, and when Mathews was appointed to the command, he had suggested that Lestock should be recalled.

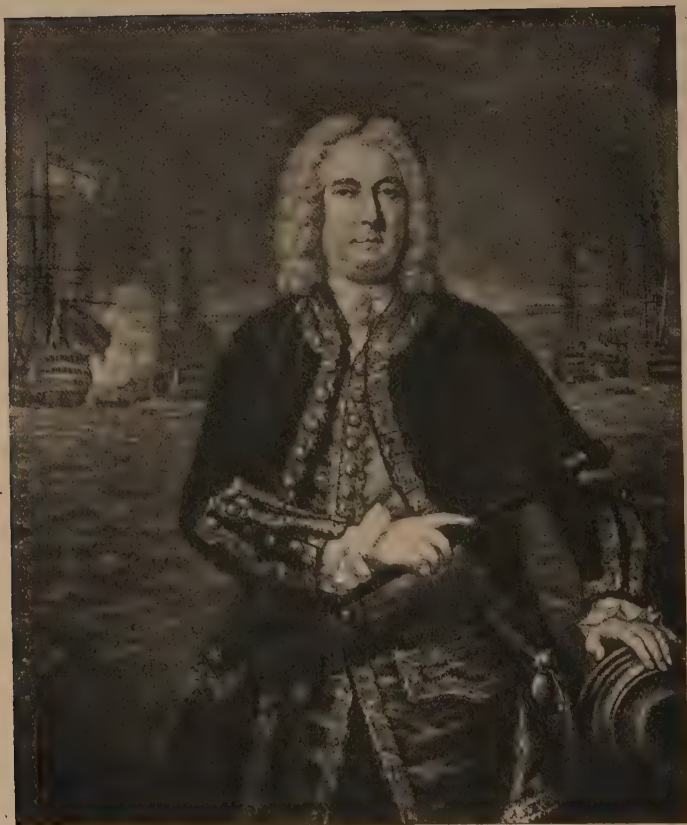
Not only was this not done, but a dormant commission was sent to Lestock, appointing him commander-in-chief in case Mathews died or was compelled by ill-health to resign his command. It is impossible to excuse the admiralty of the day for having placed these men together. Yet we have seen history repeat itself in a precisely similar manner, in the sister service, at the time of the Crimean war.

The result was not difficult to foretell. Given a commander-in-chief, personally brave but also ignorant, obstinate, and incompetent; given a second in command resolved to confine himself to the strict letter of his orders; given also several incapable subordinates who could neither understand what the commander-in-chief meant, nor see what it was their duty to do, and disaster might easily result.

With a light easterly wind, the French, in line of battle fairly well formed, were steering to the south, followed by the Spaniards in straggling disorder. The English were to windward, but in two days they were not able to get into line of battle, and on the third Mathews had no better success.

So hoping, possibly, that in battle things would right themselves, Mathews made the signal to engage, and, himself in the "Namur" of ninety guns, accompanied by Captain Cornewall in the "Marlborough", ran down to the enemy and brought the Spanish flagship, the "Real Felipe", to close action.

The "Real Felipe's" seconds were beaten to leeward, and she herself was hard pressed; on the other hand the



ADMIRAL THOMAS MATHEWS

From an engraving by Faber after a painting by Arnulphy

"Namur" suffered severely, the "Marlborough" was dismasted and Cornwall was killed. But none of the other ships of Mathews's division came to their support. The leading ships kept aloof, fearful of being doubled on by the French who were extended far beyond them. And the whole of the rear division, under the command of Lestock, was several miles astern—far out of gunshot. Everything, in fact, was in a hopeless muddle.

Men were present in that action who were known afterwards as good officers and competent admirals, within the limits of routine. There was only one man who, at the critical time, showed himself able to interpret the admiral's confused orders by the circumstances of the action, or rather, to anticipate Nelson's celebrated memorandum that "in case signals can neither be seen nor perfectly understood, no captain can do very wrong if he places his ship alongside that of an enemy." This man was Hawke, the captain of the "Berwick", who, having in the first instance closed with the Spanish "Neptuno" and beaten her out of the line, marked the "Poder" keeping up a distant fire on three or four English ships which "were a-barking at her."

Seeing this, Hawke engaged within pistol-shot. In twenty minutes the "Poder" was dismasted, and many of her guns dismounted. She had lost 200 men killed and wounded, and was forced to strike. The loss of the "Berwick" was only five men wounded.

The "Poder" was taken possession of by a party from the "Berwick", but she was afterwards recaptured when the French tacked to support the Spaniards, and the English retired before them. On the next day the English fleet at last got into one united line, but the allies were some distance to the south-westward, and though Mathews followed he could not overtake them.

Believing that further pursuit was useless, Mathews gave up the attempt and withdrew to Port Mahon, while the French put into Alicante, and the Spaniards into Cartagena. One result of the battle, if it can be called a battle, among others, was that the blockade of the sea route from Spain to Italy was effectually raised.

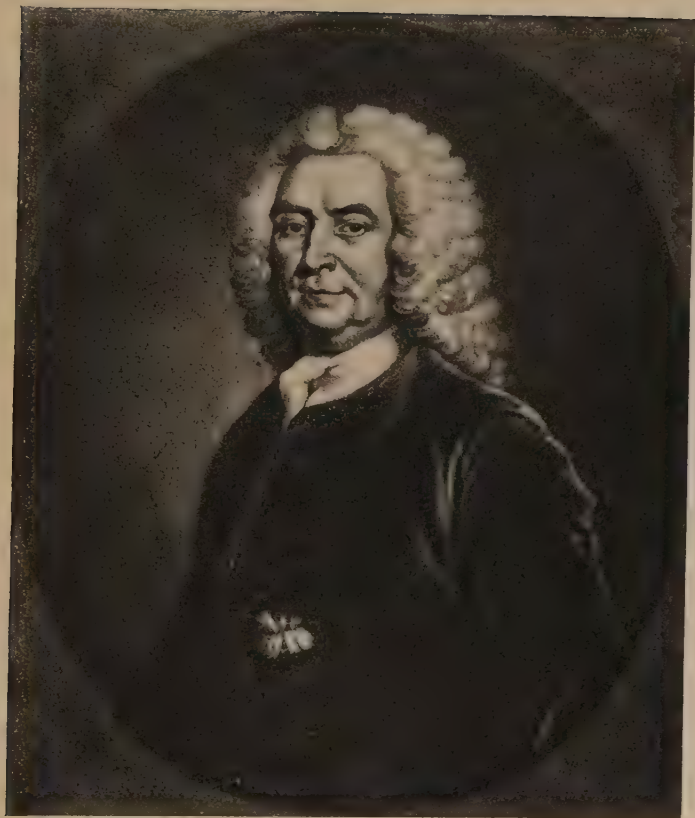
With the courts-martial in England, on the captains who had kept aloof from the fight, on Lestock who had taken no part in it, and on Mathews who had misconducted it, we are not now concerned. It is enough to say that they revealed perhaps the lowest depths to which, in modern times, our navy has been allowed to sink. And the only relief to this miserable story was supplied by the brilliant conduct of Hawke.

Hawke had shown that he was not afraid of responsibility, he had seen the right thing to do, and had run great risks in bearing down out of the line to carry out his views. That his ship was in good gunnery order is evident, notwithstanding the fact that his crew had been "poor, puny fellows" some six months before the action.

Here we have the highest type of naval officer. A man of cool courage and determination, prompt decision, a clear idea of the course to adopt, the leader of men who could command the confidence of those serving under him, and who was able to get his ship into such good order that he could carry matters to a successful conclusion. It is unnecessary to dwell on this, but it is a combination of qualities which is given to few.

Other naval heroes have excelled Hawke in special points, but it is doubtful if any have so completely united the qualities which ensure success in command.

There is one point connected with this wretched "miscarriage" which calls for notice, namely the absolute nature of the "Fighting Instructions," which laid down



ADMIRAL RICHARD LESTOCK

From an engraving by Faber after a painting by Wollaston

the obligation of fighting in line. In the first instance the "line of battle" was a useful and safe formation, but if rigidly adhered to in action, battles were almost necessarily indecisive.

Ordinary human nature delights in a rule, and any such rule of conduct as was represented by the fighting instructions is usually founded on common sense. But it is merely a means to an end. And whether by sea or land, a hard and fast line is apt to become wooden and dangerous in the presence of those who know how to take advantage of too rigid a system.

There is a tendency in the present day to return to the rule of the line of battle; but it should be enough to point out that all our naval victories have been gained by departing from the line, or breaking it in one way or another. That this is true from the days of the Armada to Trafalgar, all students of naval history must admit, while a salutary departure from precise rules has been proved to be equally necessary to attain success in military tactics.

After the action off Toulon Hawke remained in the Mediterranean under Admiral Rowley. He was evidently trusted and frequently in command of a squadron, until September, 1745, when he paid off the "Neptune" which had latterly been Rowley's flagship, the ship being "foul and very leaky."

He was then on shore for a year, and not in very good health. On July 15 a very large promotion of flag-officers was made; and for the first time those captains who were passed over for active promotion were put on a retired list as "superannuated rear-admirals." Whether because they were supposed to have fallen into the age of the sere and yellow leaf, or for some other reason not now apparent; the joke in the navy was that they were promoted to the yellow squadron.

It was intended to shelve Hawke in this way, but the king, who had noted his conduct in Mathews's action, declared that "he would not have Hawke yellowed."

And so, contrary to the wish of the admiralty, Hawke was made rear-admiral of the white, Boscawen, to whom the promotion was extended, being at the same time made rear-admiral of the blue.

On July 22 Hawke hoisted his flag on board the "Gloucester" as second to Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Warren, who had succeeded Anson in command "of the western squadron." On September 5 Warren, who was in bad health, resigned his command, which was entrusted to Hawke. Three years before the western fleet had been under the command of Sir John Norris, whose service had been marked by the caution that was to be expected from a very old man. But Anson, who was temporarily conducting the affairs of the admiralty, expressed uneasiness at sending the fleet to sea "under so young an officer."

As Hawke was forty-two it is to be supposed that Anson was referring, not to his age, but to his standing on the list of admirals.

Hawke's letters to Warren at this time illustrate his single-minded devotion to duty. He had been sent to intercept a French convoy from Rochelle, which was known to be escorted by a strong force. But there were also Spanish galleons on their way to Cadiz, a fact which seemed to be very important in Warren's opinion.

Hawke, however, would not be led away from his main object, and on October 16 he wrote that "he must lay aside all thoughts of the galleons, as it is impossible for him to divide his forces. He proposed to cruise between the latitudes of 45° and 47° 30' N. in the meridian of Cape Ortegal, this being the most likely track for the French convoy."



ADMIRAL SIR PETER WARREN

From an engraving by Faber after a painting by Hudson

Also he mentioned that "the ships joining him are far from being in a condition for distant cruises, through the negligence of the agent victualler, so that he will not be able to stay out beyond the end of October; but he is determined to cruise while he can keep any number of them together."

On October 14, Hawke being "ninety-four leagues N. by W. of Cape Finisterre," the French were sighted on the weather-bow. The French squadron in charge of the convoy consisted of nine ships of the line and some frigates. Hawke's force was unquestionably superior; it consisted of fourteen ships of the line, but two of them were of only fifty guns, and the disparity of weight of metal and number of men was much less than might be supposed, owing to the greater individual force of the French ships.

The French commodore sent the merchant ships ahead under the escort of a 60-gun ship and the frigates, whilst, with the other eight ships under easy sail, he formed line between the English and his convoy. At first Hawke also formed line of battle, but afterwards, seeing his superiority of number and judging that he was losing time, he made the signal for the whole squadron to chase, and half-an-hour later, his leading ships being within "a proper distance," he made the signal to engage.

The action was immediately begun, and as the other ships came up, they passed on from the rear towards the van of the enemy, and one by one the French ships were overwhelmed. Indeed only two escaped, and although the great bulk of the merchant ships escaped for the time, they were afterwards captured on their arrival near the West Indies. For Hawke had sent off a dispatch to the commodore of the station to warn him to be on the look out for them.

Hawke's conduct of the battle seems to have been

altogether admirable. He wanted a complete victory, and to ensure this he had to attack at once, while the French were compelled to stay and fight so that the convoy might have time to escape.

The example he himself set is worthy of note. The "Severn", the first French ship which struck, hauled down her colours to the "Devonshire"—Hawke's flagship. And both by example and signal he showed, like Nelson, his determination to bring matters to an issue by close action.

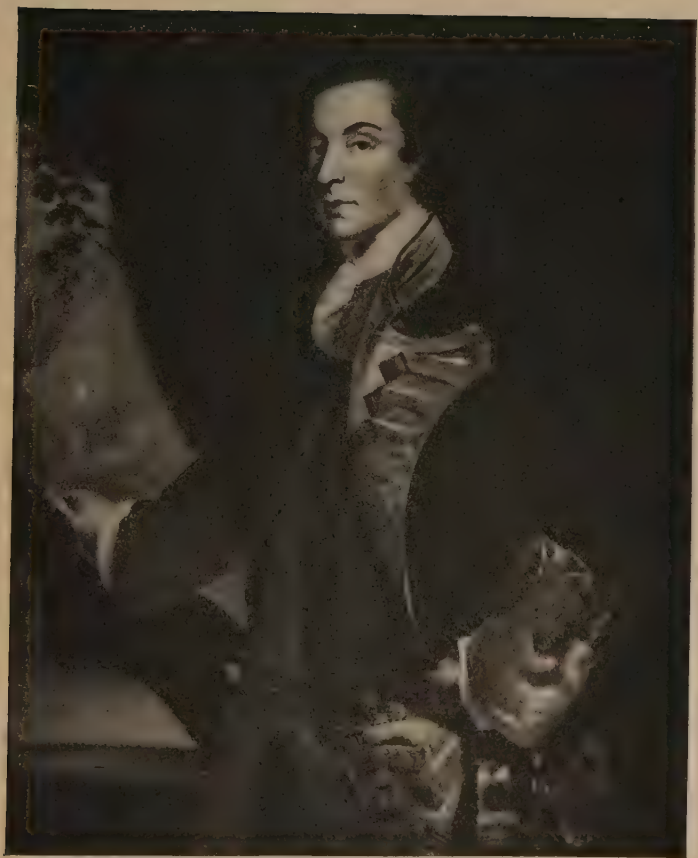
He received gallant support from his captains, notably from Rodney, Saumarez, Harland, and Saunders.

On the French side, too, the conduct of the commodore and his squadron was extremely praiseworthy. Supporting each other to the last they made an excellent fight against a very superior force, and inflicted a loss on the British of 700 men, their own losses being given as 800.

This protracted defence on the part of the French was mainly due to the greater size of their ships, to the heavier metal, the larger crews, and, above all, to the thicker scantling. Out of 134 shot fired from lower-deck guns which, it was stated, struck the French ship, "Tonnant", only one penetrated.

The greater power of the French ships was well known, and shortly before the action we find Warren writing to Anson: "I am greatly pleased to hear that it has been proposed, with prospect of success, to augment the number of men and weight of metal in all the different classes of our ships, to put them on a par with those of the French."

In England, when Hawke arrived at Spithead with his six prizes, the rejoicings for the victory were very great. The king, who always spoke of him as *his* admiral, received and rewarded him with the Cross of the Bath.



GEORGE BRYDGES, FIRST LORD RODNEY

From a copy of a painting by Reynolds in the National Portrait Gallery

As compared with the peerage given to Anson for his victory over a much inferior force, the order of the Bath conferred on Hawke does not seem to have erred on the side of liberality. But it must be remembered that while Anson was a lord of the admiralty, Hawke was merely a very junior admiral who, by a fortunate accident, had been put in high command.

Under such circumstances, as in the somewhat similar case of Nelson after the Nile, it is seldom that services are adequately recognized.

By the admiralty his conduct was highly appreciated; and a vacancy occurring just at this time in the representation of Portsmouth, the Duke of Bedford, who was first lord of the admiralty, wrote to the Mayor recommending Hawke, and this recommendation seems to have been equivalent to his election. A letter from Keppel to Anson says: "I hear the town is to have Sir Edward Hawke for its member, and the bells were very troublesome yesterday on that account."

But Hawke was again at sea, serving, at his own request, under Warren who had resumed the command; a proof, if it was needed, of his loyalty towards one who had done so much towards placing him in the prominent position which he now filled in public estimation. It was, however, only for a few months. In May, 1748, hostilities ceased; the preliminaries of peace were signed and were celebrated by a promotion of flag-officers, in which Hawke was advanced to be vice-admiral of the blue.

The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was largely due to the naval successes of 1747. These successes had put an end to the sea-borne commerce of both France and Spain, and had made it impossible for either country to send reinforcements to their colonial possessions. On shore we had sustained many defeats, and we had added some

thirty millions to the National Debt, chiefly in payments to Austria for permission to fight her battles.

But the naval victories were the ruling factor of the situation, a lesson which will bear repetition. It has been too much the custom to look upon naval actions as a series of duels in which success means a "victory" with some immediate advantage, and failure means a "defeat" with some direct loss.

Captain Mahan in his *Influence of Sea Power upon History* explodes this fallacy, and in his brilliant pages calls attention to "the paramount though silent influence of sea-power on the course of events." He also points out how our naval predominance at this period, and in the Seven Years' War, chiefly shown in European waters, forced the French to lose India, "place after place falling, till Pondicherry itself surrendered, surrounded by land and cut off from sea."

When war broke out again in 1755 Hawke was appointed to command the western squadron. His orders were to cruise in the Bay of Biscay to intercept a homeward-bound French squadron which had put into Cadiz, and he sailed in July.

The intention of this is not quite clear, for Anson, at any rate, who presumably had something to do with Hawke's instructions, knew very well that, in ordinary course during August or September, a ship or squadron going from Cadiz to Brest does not cross the Bay of Biscay. Probably the cruise was nothing more than a sop to public opinion, but when Hawke heard that the French squadron, by making a long stretch to the westward as it was bound to do, had got into Brest, he returned to Plymouth and received a *quasi* reprimand from the admiralty.

Hawke replied that the beer was bad, the water

abominable, and the men very sickly. "If their lordships thought he had not done his duty," he added, "he was ready and willing to resign his command to any one else in whose abilities they might have more confidence."

Early in the following spring, 1756, he was again afloat, and on May 20 Byng's action was fought. With the quarrels which raged around Byng's conduct, and his sad fate, we have now nothing to do. It may be that his ships were ill-equipped, but he showed none of the qualities required in a naval commander.

The action itself was virtually a defeat, for Byng failed to relieve Minorca and returned with his squadron to Gibraltar. Early in June Byng's failure was known in England, and Hawke, who had returned to Spithead in May was sent to Gibraltar to supersede him.

On June 16 he sailed in the "Antelope", and reached Gibraltar on July 4. Then he had the unpleasant task of sending Byng and West home, and of making "immediate and expeditious" inquiry into the conduct of the captains.

On July 10 he sailed for Minorca, but he was too late. Before he arrived the island was in full possession of the French, and their fleet had returned to Toulon. His Mediterranean command lasted till January 14, 1757, and there is ample evidence of his spirit and energy in restoring the prestige of the British flag. The insolence of the Spaniards and the Austrian Italians, both of whom were not unnaturally hostile in feeling, though nominally at peace with Great Britain, was considerably curbed.

On the downfall of the Duke of Newcastle's ministry in November, 1756, Anson had been dismissed from the admiralty, and there appeared, in some quarters, an inclination to hold him responsible for the loss of Minorca. But in June, 1757, when Pitt returned to office, virtually

as prime minister, Anson was re-appointed first lord of the admiralty; the latter wished Hawke to join the board. This, however, was prevented, owing, it was supposed, to a want of cordiality between Hawke and Pitt.

There are indeed many indications of Pitt's personal dislike of Hawke. But this did not prevent Pitt from appointing him to the naval command of the expedition against Rochefort in the following September.

With the intended object of the expedition Hawke had very little to do. Accompanied by a strong fleet, he convoyed the transports to Basque Roads, and, under his orders, the island of Aix was occupied. Soundings were also taken to find a proper place for landing the troops which were intended to destroy the shipping, docks, and naval stores at Rochefort. But although a favourable place was found nothing was done.

Several councils of war, "composed of four sea-officers and four land-officers," followed, but no landing was made, and the French had time to strengthen their works. Throughout Hawke had held "that the landing could be effected; that the troops ought to be landed for some further attempt." But not considering himself a judge of land operations, he contented himself with urging the generals to decide upon something. However nothing happened, though at one time the troops were put into the boats in order to attack Fort Fouras.

The fiery Wolfe, who was quartermaster-general, chafed at the inaction and proposed several plans. But he was not then known, and on naval matters, at any rate, his criticisms are unreliable.

At length, on September 29, Hawke wrote officially to Sir John Mordaunt, that "should the general officers of the troops have no further operations to propose, he intends to proceed to England without loss of time."

To this letter the general replied that "after talking it over, we all agree in returning directly to England." Thereupon the fleet sailed and reached England on October 7.

A court-martial on Sir John Mordaunt followed, and he was acquitted. Hawke's reputation did not suffer materially, but he seems to have felt the failure deeply. Possibly the attack on the island of Aix was a waste of time, but even if it was it does not appear that this had anything to do with delaying the attack on Rochefort, the decision as to which lay entirely with the soldiers.

As a naval officer, Hawke was clear, determined, and enterprising, but, in accordance with his character, he declined to dictate on any subject with which he was imperfectly acquainted. As a sea-officer he was on sure ground, but though he was a member of parliament little is heard of him as a politician, and he seems to have avoided diplomacy altogether.

Unlike Nelson, whose energetic spirit led him to hold strong views on military matters, Hawke preferred to stick to his last as a sea-officer, and as such he was certainly unrivalled in his own times.

From October to December Hawke was again at sea with his fleet, and in the early spring of 1758 he was pressing on the admiralty the case of seamen discharged as unserviceable from disease or wounds, who were unable to receive their pay up to the date of their discharge. And thus, with money owing to them, "have nothing to subsist them on their way home, and are reduced to beg through all parts of the kingdom."

His representations, which he urged pertinaciously, seem to have annoyed the admiralty, and were doubtless closely connected with a later quarrel. But at the moment his services were wanted. The French had

intended to join their Mediterranean and Rochefort squadrons which, when united, were to proceed with a convoy to Louisbourg.

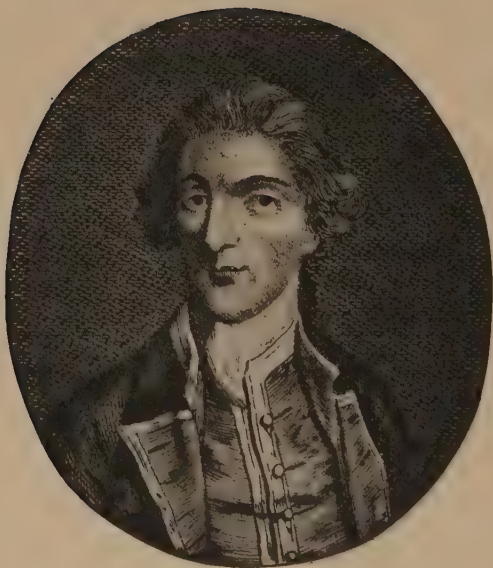
In the Mediterranean, however, Admiral Osborn had captured part of the squadron, and shut up the rest in Cartagena. So it was now proposed that the Louisbourg convoy should sail under the escort of the Rochefort ships alone. In order to prevent this Hawke sailed from Portsmouth on March 12, with seven ships of the line and three frigates, but without the smaller vessels necessary for operations in shoal water.

In the Basque Roads, on April 3, he found five line of battle ships, six or seven frigates, and about forty merchant ships with 3,000 troops on board. They all cut or slipped in great confusion, and escaped over the mud flats into Rochefort, the line of battle ships throwing their guns and stores overboard. What could be done, Hawke did; but he felt that he might have done more if he had been supplied with fire-ships and vessels of light draught. Thoroughly discontented he left Captain Keppel to blockade the convoy in the river, and returned to Spithead, when he applied for four days' leave to settle his private affairs. It was curtly refused; he was needed at Portsmouth to hasten the fitting out of the ships.

Pitt, in fact, was resolving on a series of descents on the coast of France. These descents were to be on a smaller scale, under the escort of a squadron of vessels of lighter draught, commanded by a captain, and covered by the grand fleet. The captain chosen for this service was Howe, and on May 10 he called on Hawke with an order as to his proceedings:

At this Hawke's anger boiled over, and the same evening he wrote to the secretary of the admiralty:

"Last September I was sent out to command an



ADMIRAL JOHN BYRON ·

From an engraving

expedition under all the disadvantages one could possibly labour under, arising chiefly from my being under the influence of land-officers in councils of war at sea. Last cruise I went out on a particular service almost without the least means of performing it. Now, every means to ensure success is provided; another is to reap the credit; while it is probable I, with the capital ships, might be ordered to cruise in such manner as to prevent his failing in this attempt. To fit out ships for this service I have been kept here, and even now have their lordships' directions, at least in terms, to obey him.

"He is to judge of what he wants for his expedition; he is to make his demands and I am to comply with them. I have therefore directed my flag immediately to be struck, and left their lordships' orders with Vice-Admiral Holburne, for no consequence that can attend my striking it without orders shall ever out-balance with me the wearing it one moment with discredit."

But Hawke could not be spared. He was sent for to the admiralty. Explanations were made; his feelings were soothed. Acknowledging that he had acted hastily, he re-hoisted his flag on the 17th.

The difficulty was got over by Anson taking the command, Hawke serving under him. And on June 1 the grand fleet put to sea, together with Howe's squadron and the troops.

But Hawke was out of health. On the 18th he asked permission to go to Spithead, and, on arriving, he applied for leave of absence, as being "altogether incapable of further duty." The leave was granted, the secretary of the admiralty writing that "the lords are much concerned for his indisposition." And after this we hear nothing more of misunderstandings between Hawke and the admiralty. As illustrations of Hawke's

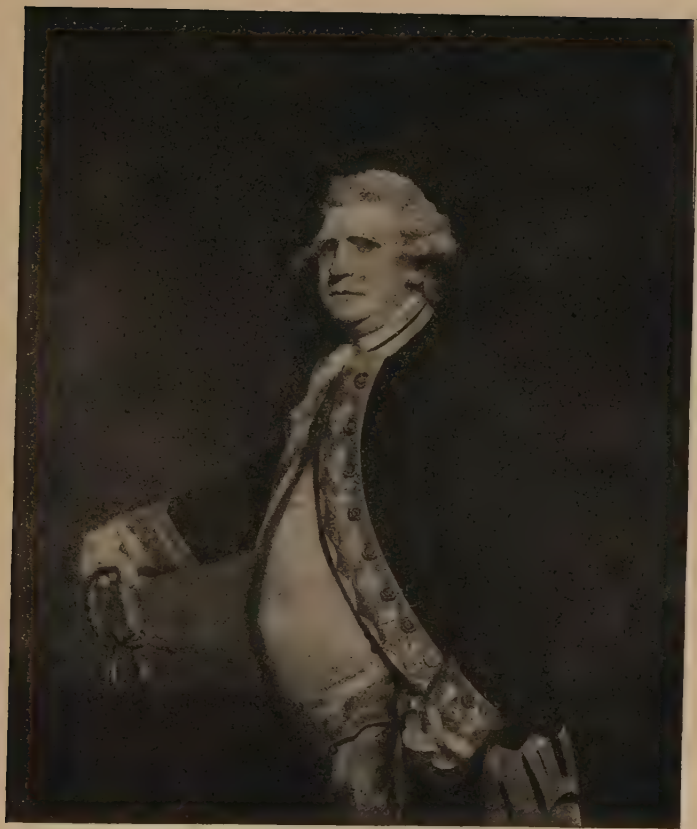
character, of his sense of honour, of his determination neither to endure a slight nor to retain a nominal command, these details are of intense personal interest.

For eleven months Hawke was on shore; but on May 13, 1759 ("the wonderful year"), he re-hoisted his flag in the "*Ramillies*", and on the 20th sailed from Torbay in command of a fleet of twenty-five sail of the line. Among his captains were many who rose high in the service, Howe, Barrington, Keppel, Byron, Duff, and Hervey, afterwards third Earl of Bristol. His task was to watch and blockade the Brest fleet, which, after June, was commanded by M. de Conflans, Vice-Admiral of France.

This is the first that we hear of a regular blockade, and it is worth while to explain how this practice, which afterwards became the regular system, originated. For some time past it had been the custom to keep some sort of a watch over French ports, though nothing that could fairly be described as a system of blockades appears to have been in force until 1759.

Early in that year the French made almost ostentatious preparations for the invasion of England, Scotland, and Ireland. From Havre England was to be invaded by means of flat-bottomed boats. From Dunkirk a small force was to be embarked in five frigates for Scotland. From the Morbihan, transports, escorted by the combined Brest and Toulon squadrons, were to embark a large force for Ireland.

To meet these Hawke detached Reynolds, who was afterwards relieved by Duff, to watch the Morbihan. Rear-Admiral Rodney was in the Channel watching Havre, which he successfully bombarded in July. Captain Boys watched the famous privateersman, Thurot, off Dunkirk. Admiral Smith, popularly known as Tom of



AUGUSTUS, VISCOUNT KEPPEL

From a painting by Reynolds in the National Portrait Gallery

Ten Thousand, commanded a reserve fleet in the Downs. Hawke himself was off Brest, and Boscawen was off Toulon.

Naturally the operations of the squadrons sent to watch an enemy inside a port assumed the character of a blockade, and we propose to show the way in which Hawke carried this out.

When he appeared off Brest the French fleet was far from ready. So Hawke was able to keep his ships efficient by sending them two at a time to Plymouth to be cleaned. Captain Hervey in the "Monmouth", with some smaller vessels, was ordered to watch the port, and he frequently anchored "close to the harbour's mouth, in sight of the French fleet." Hervey's conduct in this service won the approval of his admiral. In fine weather the main body of the fleet cruised at some distance off the port.

During the whole of the summer and autumn Hawke maintained this arduous blockade. From May to November he held Brest a sealed port. Up to that time there had been nothing like it, and forty years passed before it was repeated by St Vincent and Cornwallis.

In westerly gales Hawke, knowing that the French could not come out, ran for shelter to Plymouth or Torbay, but directly the wind shifted he was off his port again. That he could carry out this entirely new departure, and be loyally served by his captains, speaks well for his strength of character. Yet this is the man whom Horace Walpole absurdly describes as "really weak, and childishly abandoned to the guidance of a Scotch secretary."

In other respects we have proof of Hawke's high qualifications for command, in his determination to get rid of incompetent officers, and especially in his care for his men's well-being. Again and again he complained of

the bad beer, and he asked for live bullocks and sheep. He pointed out to the admiralty that the "relief of the squadron depends more on the refreshment of the ships' companies than on cleaning the ships." He preferred a mere partial cleaning, so that the men should not be "harassed and fatigued."

He wished the ships to be "at rest for ten days in port, and at their departure bring such a quantity of fresh meat as will keep sweet at this season, two or three live bullocks and twenty sheep." He insisted that the medical officers should be able to do their work properly, and one surgeon he sent home, "his infirmities rendering him incapable of his duty." Another surgeon he ordered to be summarily discharged, and when the navy-board complained of his interference, he replied:

"There was no probability of being able to try him by court-martial for his disobedience of orders and other dirty crimes; nor could I, in the circumstances the ship was then in, hourly in the face of the enemy, admit of sentries being kept on so worthless a fellow. I shall not enter into a dispute with you about my authority as a commanding officer, neither do I ever think of inconveniences or prejudice to myself, where the good of the service is concerned."

During the long summer and autumn one change took place in the situation. On August 18 Boscawen either took or destroyed M. de la Clue's squadron from Toulon in the Straits of Gibraltar. No longer was the intended junction with M. de Conflans to be feared, but even without de la Clue's squadron the French fleet was nearly equal to Hawke's, worn out as it was with constant cruising.

Stormy weather set in at the beginning of November, and on the 5th Hawke wrote to the admiralty that if it



ADMIRAL AUGUSTUS HERVEY, THIRD EARL OF BRISTOL
From an engraving by Watson after a painting by Gainsborough

blew hard from the west he would have to put into Torbay. "Single ships," he wrote "may struggle against a hard gale when a squadron cannot."

Even Horace Walpole could admire this effort to keep the sea in November, for not so long before Sir Cloudisley Shovell had thought it dangerous for the big ships to stay out after September.

Hawke came in to Torbay on the 10th, put to sea again on the 12th, was driven back on the 13th, and again got out on the 14th. In the meantime he had shifted his flag to the "Royal George" of 100 guns, for the "Ramilies" was leaking badly, and in need of a thorough refit.

Short as his absence had been it had permitted much to happen. M. Bompard who, with a squadron of seven sail of the line, had been expected from Martinique, had run into Brest with the same westerly gale that had forced Hawke to leave the coast.

With a reinforcement of trained and experienced seamen Conflans put to sea on November 14 with twenty-one ships of the line. On the very same day Hawke, with twenty-three ships of the line, sailed from Torbay.

And now we come to the final stage, when Hawke was at last to reap the reward of his labours and tenacity. On the 17th he heard that the French fleet was at sea and working its way to the eastward, so "carrying a press of sail all night, with a hard gale at SSE in pursuit, he makes no doubt of coming up with them, either at sea or in Quiberon Bay." And so for Quiberon Bay he pressed on without hesitation, the fleet of twenty-three ships of the line being preceded by the "Maidstone" and "Coventry" frigates, one on each bow.

On November 20 he found the French fleet, and by nightfall had gained one of the most memorable of our naval victories. The following account is largely taken

from Hawke's own dispatch, which he wrote before he quite realized how complete a victory he had gained. So he scarcely does justice to himself, though his tone is that of a man who feels that he has done his duty.

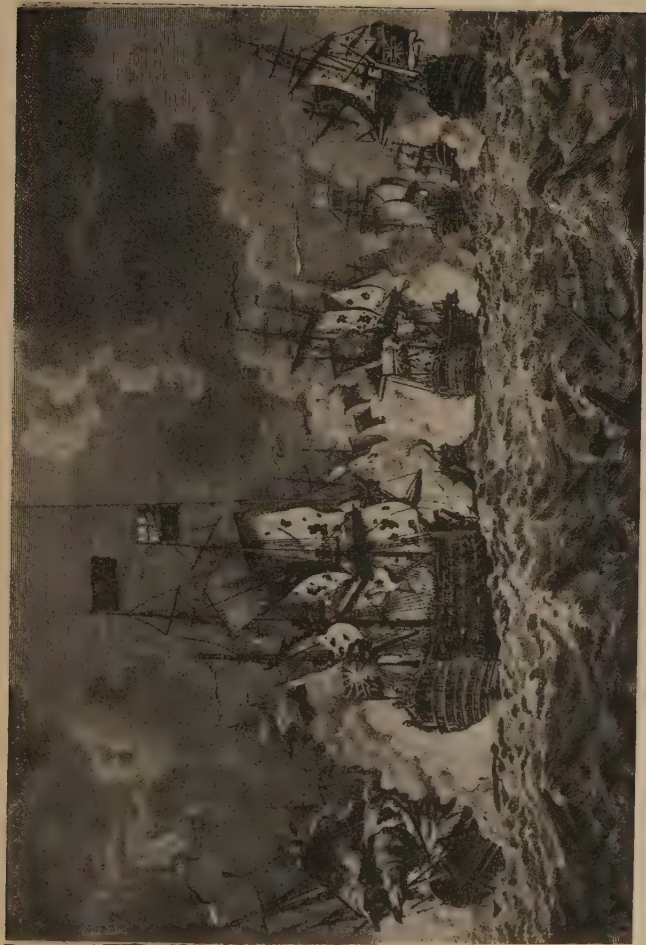
"When," he wrote, "I consider the season of the year, the hard gales on the day of action, a flying enemy, the shortness of the day, and the coast they were on, I can boldly affirm that all that could possibly be done has been done."

On the morning of November 20 the "Maidstone" signalled a fleet, and this was shortly afterwards confirmed by the "Magnamine." Then "the signal was immediately made to form line abreast in order to draw all the ships in the fleet up."

The French had been chasing Duff's squadron of frigates and bombs, which had put to sea on the appearance of Conflans' fleet. But when Hawke's fleet was signalled, they hauled in for Quiberon Bay, "going off under as much sail as they could carry, and at the same time keep together. It was blowing fresh, increasing to a gale at N.W., and with heavy squalls."

But seeing that they were making off Hawke signalled the seven ships nearest the enemy to chase and to draw into line ahead of him, hoping to stop them till the rest of his fleet could come up so that "no time should be lost." The rest of the fleet was also ordered to form as they chased; and "we crowded after them with every sail our ship could bear."

In this determined spirit the action was fought, and although we do not go to a ballad for technical or tactical accuracy, the spirit is admirably given in Mr. Henry Newbolt's vigorous lines:



THE BATTLE OF QUIBERON BAY

From an engraving by Pass after a picture by Godefroy

“ ’Twas long past noon on a wild November day,
When Hawke came swooping from the west;
He heard the breakers thundering in Quiberon Bay,
But he flew the flag for battle, line abreast.
Down upon the quicksands, roaring out of sight,
Fiercely beat the storm-wind, darkly fell the night;
But they took the foe for pilot and the cannon’s glare for
light,
When Hawke came swooping from the west.”

Neither the storm nor the perils of a treacherous coast could stop the British admiral from forcing on a general engagement, and Hawke’s own example was as brilliant as it had been in 1747.

His well-known answer to the master of his ship, who remonstrated against his order to place the “Royal George” alongside the French admiral on account of the perils of the navigation, is characteristic: “You have done your duty, sir, in showing the danger; you are now to comply with my order and lay me alongside the ‘Soleil Royal.’”

Such conduct reaped its reward. The result is summed up by J. R. Green in his *Short History of the English People*: “Two English ships were lost on the shoals, but the French fleet was ruined, and the disgrace of Byng’s retreat wiped away.”

Quiberon Bay is formed by the coast of Morbihan on the east, while on the west is a promontory stretching to the southward, at the extremity of which are the detached islands of Belle Isle and Houat, forming a semi-circle with the reefs Cardinal and Four.

Conflans, trusting to his pilot, entered the bay at the head of his fleet, and although, by this movement, he left his rear ships open to attack, he could not have expected

that the enemy would follow him among the shoals, in such weather and without any knowledge of the coast.

With a more cautious admiral, this movement would have been successful, but unfortunately for Conflans Hawke commanded the British fleet, and he followed without hesitation.

To clear the Cardinals the ships had to haul to the wind before keeping away into the bay, and this must have required good seamanship in the middle of an engagement. Two French ships, the "Thésée" and "Superbe", cap-sized and sank from this cause and from trying to fight their lower tier of guns.

A letter from the chaplain of one of the ships, dated November 25, says:

"It was expected that the action would be very great and general, but there was not an Englishman, high to low, who did not assure himself of victory. The admiral told his officers he was for the old way of fighting, to make downright work of them. . . ."

He continues:

"It was now 4 o'clock. The 'Royal George' continued advancing, intending to go alongside the 'Soleil Royal,' which had endeavoured to succour her rear ships. She passed the 'Torbay,' which was closely engaged with the 'Thésée' of seventy-four guns, and soon afterwards sent that ship to the bottom. . . . The two commanders-in-chief were now very near, and M. Conflans gave the English ship her broadside; the 'Royal George' returned the uncivil salutation; but after two or three exchanges of this kind, the Marshal of France declined the combat and sheered off."

In the course of his letter the chaplain makes it clear that the "Royal George" was in the very thick of the fight, having been engaged with all three of the French

admirals, and with such an example it is no wonder that the captains "acted like angels," as Hawke afterwards enthusiastically expressed it.

About 5 o'clock, it being quite dark, and on a lee shore, the admiral made the signal to anchor. In the morning he found himself well inside the bay.

The "Soleil Royal" and "Héros," which had anchored among the English ships, cut their cables and ran ashore, The "Essex" was at once signalled to slip in pursuit; but as she was running down, another signal directed her to go to the assistance of the "Resolution", aground on the Four. In attempting to do this she also got aground and both ships were lost, though most of the crew were saved.

The result of the action then, was that six French line of battle ships were taken, sunk, or burnt, the "Soleil Royal" among the latter, M. de Conflans escaping to the shore half naked. Seven ships got into the Vilaine over the bar with only twelve feet of water on it, being hauled through the mud, after throwing their guns and stores overboard. But of these only three were saved, the others having broken their backs by taking the ground at every tide. The remainder of the fleet escaped to Rochefort; Keppel, who was sent after them, reporting that they had got high up the Charente. Hawke tried by fire-ships to destroy the French ships in the Vilaine, but two days of heavy weather made it impossible.

Our losses in the battle were extremely small, amounting to only 50 killed and 250 wounded.

The battle of Quiberon Bay was felt at the time to be a crowning victory. For once Horace Walpole expressed admiration of Hawke, while Smollett speaks of the fight as "one of the most perilous and important actions that ever happened in any war between the two nations; for it

not only defeated the projected invasion which had hung menacing so long over the apprehensions of Great Britain, but it gave the finishing blow to the naval power of France."

A concluding remark in the chaplain's letter already referred to, is very suggestive. He says, "Sir Edward has been very liberal in his praises, without a single imputation to cast a shade on the triumph of the day."

It was but fifteen years since Mathews's action, and what a change of spirit is shown. Even Hawke himself, before he was well known and trusted, had been obliged to complain of his captains. But now, like Nelson later on, he was able to infuse his spirit into all who commanded under him.

Though there are great contrasts in the characters of Hawke and Nelson, the conduct of the one at Quiberon Bay may, in many respects, be considered the prototype of the other's at Aboukir. In both cases plausible reasons could have been given for caution and delay, but neither Hawke nor Nelson hesitated. They knew the weapon they had themselves helped to forge, and they rightly considered that the risks were small when compared with the advantage to be gained.

Hawke remained on the French coast until January 17, 1760, when he returned to England. Hardships and the anxieties of the command were telling their tale, and on December 16 he had written: "I have now been thirty-one weeks on board, without setting my foot on shore, and cannot expect that my health will hold out much longer. I therefore hope to be relieved."

Amidst so much that was extraordinary in the battle of Quiberon Bay, not the least curious thing was the very sparing manner in which rewards were given to the men

who had won this great victory. Bonfires, thanks of parliament, royal smiles, cost little, and, in the words of the proverb, "butter no parsnips."

And beyond these Sir Charles Hardy, the second in command, got nothing. Of the captains who had nobly crowded into the bay in pursuit of the French, two were acquitted by court-martial for losing their ships, and the others received no recognition. The seamen returned to a diet of "salt horse," possibly on account of continuous easterly gales, though the sufferers found another reason for the neglect, and said:

"Ere Hawke did bang
Monsieur Conflans
You sent us beef and beer;
Now Monsieur's beat
We've nought to eat,
Since you have nought to fear,"

while Hawke, whose head, heart, and hand had planned, directed, and won this glorious battle, was awarded a pension of £1,500 a year for two lives. It seems a hopelessly inadequate reward for the greatest victory at sea, excepting Trafalgar, recorded in history. Either Pitt, the "Great Commoner," was in a more economical mood than when he lavished subsidies to enable the King of Prussia to remove his neighbour's landmark, or he remembered a personal pique against the admiral who had made his administration glorious. Some years later, the pension was increased to £2,000, and there it remained.

With this memorable action Hawke's active career practically closed, although he re-hoisted his flag in August, 1760. Until the peace, his time was divided

between command of the fleet in the Bay of Biscay and the command at Portsmouth. He struck his flag for the last time on September 3, 1762. Promotions followed in succession until, on January 15, 1768, he was promoted to be admiral and commander-in-chief of the fleet. In 1766 he was appointed first lord of the admiralty, and held the office for the next five years.

As an administrator we do not hear much of Hawke. He had to contend with the national dislike to preparation for war in time of peace. But he is said to have laid it down as a maxim that "our fleet could only be termed considerable in the proportion it bore to that of the House of Bourbon."

It is also stated that although he broke up fourteen line of battle ships, he built thirteen, and left fifteen on the stocks. Thus we may feel certain that he watched closely the progress of ship construction in France.

It has already been said that he was no politician, and this probably accounts for his mistake in continuing to hold office when the government changed and Lord North became prime minister.

In those days of heated partisanship he could not expect to escape from being a target for the criticisms of Horace Walpole or the sneers of Junius. Walpole called him "indolent and almost superannuated", while Junius wrote contemptuously "that no expense should be spared to secure him an honourable and affluent retirement."

Against these ill-natured and ill-informed remarks, we may, however, place the opinion of Keppel, who spoke of Hawke as "the father of the British navy." In continuation Keppel said "that having sat with him at the board, he knew his conduct both in his civil and

military capacity, and that he had left behind him a name unrivalled in the maritime records of his country."

In 1771 Hawke was forced to retire on account of ill-health, but his long service received no recognition for another five years. When at last a peerage was conferred upon him, Walpole had to admit that it was both deserved and unsolicited. For five years longer he lived at Sunbury, keenly interested in the affairs of the navy, and grieving over the way in which these affairs were conducted.

That a man of this high character, conscientious, determined, patriotic, and brilliant in action, should found a school was inevitable, and in Rodney, Keppel, and Howe he left followers worthy to carry on the traditions he had done so much to frame.

Of his tactical theories we know little except that he believed in close action as the one thing needful. Writing to Sir Francis Geary, who in 1780 was in command of the grand fleet, Hawke says, "If you should be so lucky as to get sight of the enemy, get as close to them as you can. Do not let them shuffle with you by engaging at a distance, but get within musket shot if you can."

Tactically, then, we must judge of the tree by its fruits. It is certain that he would not allow himself to be hampered by "the fighting instructions," and his two principal actions were fought on the soundest tactical principles.

It is to be regretted that he did not have the opportunity to fight an action with an equal fleet at sea. But had he been given such a chance we may feel sure that he would have disregarded precise rules, that he would have taken advantage of every opportunity offered to him by the enemy, and that he would have been no more content than Nelson himself with anything less than

complete victory. This is high praise, and we doubt whether as much can be said of any of his successors, except Nelson.

Full of years and of honour, he died at Sunbury in 1781, leaving an example which is well worthy of study by those who are now entrusted with the task of preserving intact the honoured traditions of our national service.

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